NEW

FROM THE MAKERS OF ALL ABOUT HISTORY

THE ROARING TWENTIES

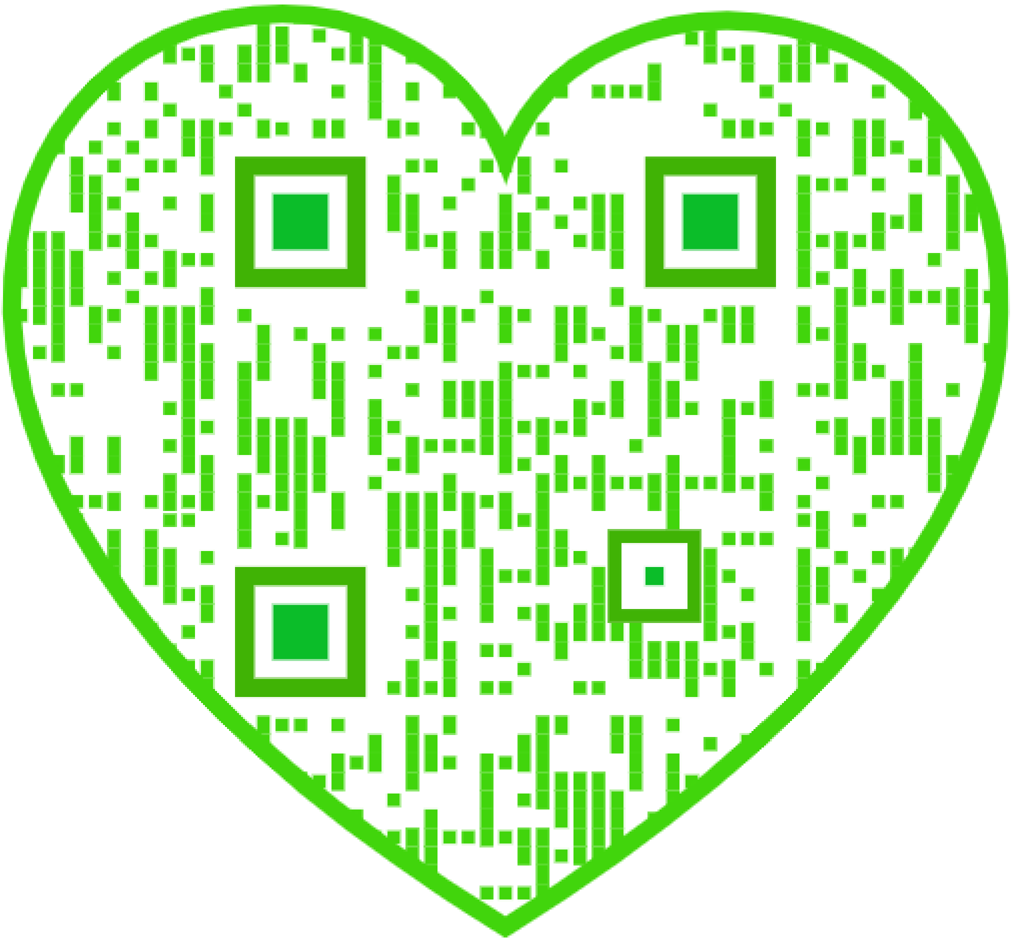
EXPLORE THE GILDED AGE OF ART DECO, DANCE AND DECADENCE

HOLLYWOODLAND

RISE OF THE AUTOMOBILE ◆ THE JAZZ AGE ◆ HOLLYWOOD'S GOLDEN ERA ◆ MOBSTERS AND MOLLS

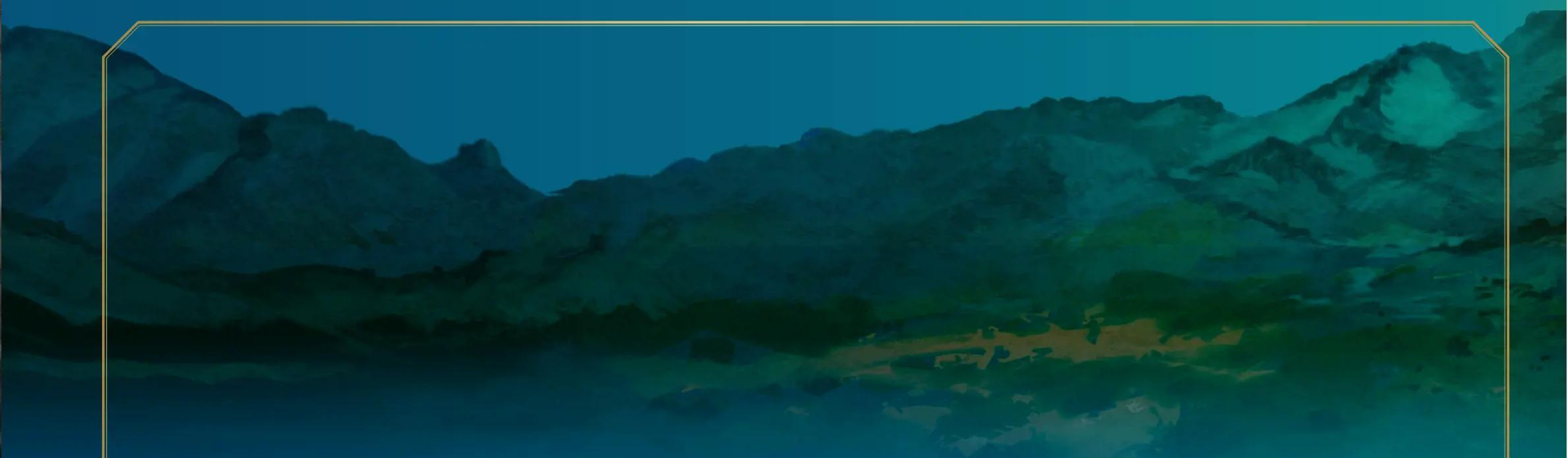
Digital Edition

SECOND EDITION



Comedian Harry Langdon poses with Hollywood Flapper girls, promoting the 1928 comedy film *The Chaser*

Getty Images



WELCOME

Delve into the debauched decadence of the gilded age and its Art Deco aesthetics with *All About History's Book of the Roaring Twenties*. Discover a decade defined by radical technological advancements, that made new forms of entertainment possible and took the toil out of everyday chores, and significant shifts in social attitudes following the end of World War I. Free from war, the West experienced an economic boom, ushering in a period of prosperity and whole new era of fivolity where music, dancing, fashion, film and fads ruled, reshaping popular culture as we know it.

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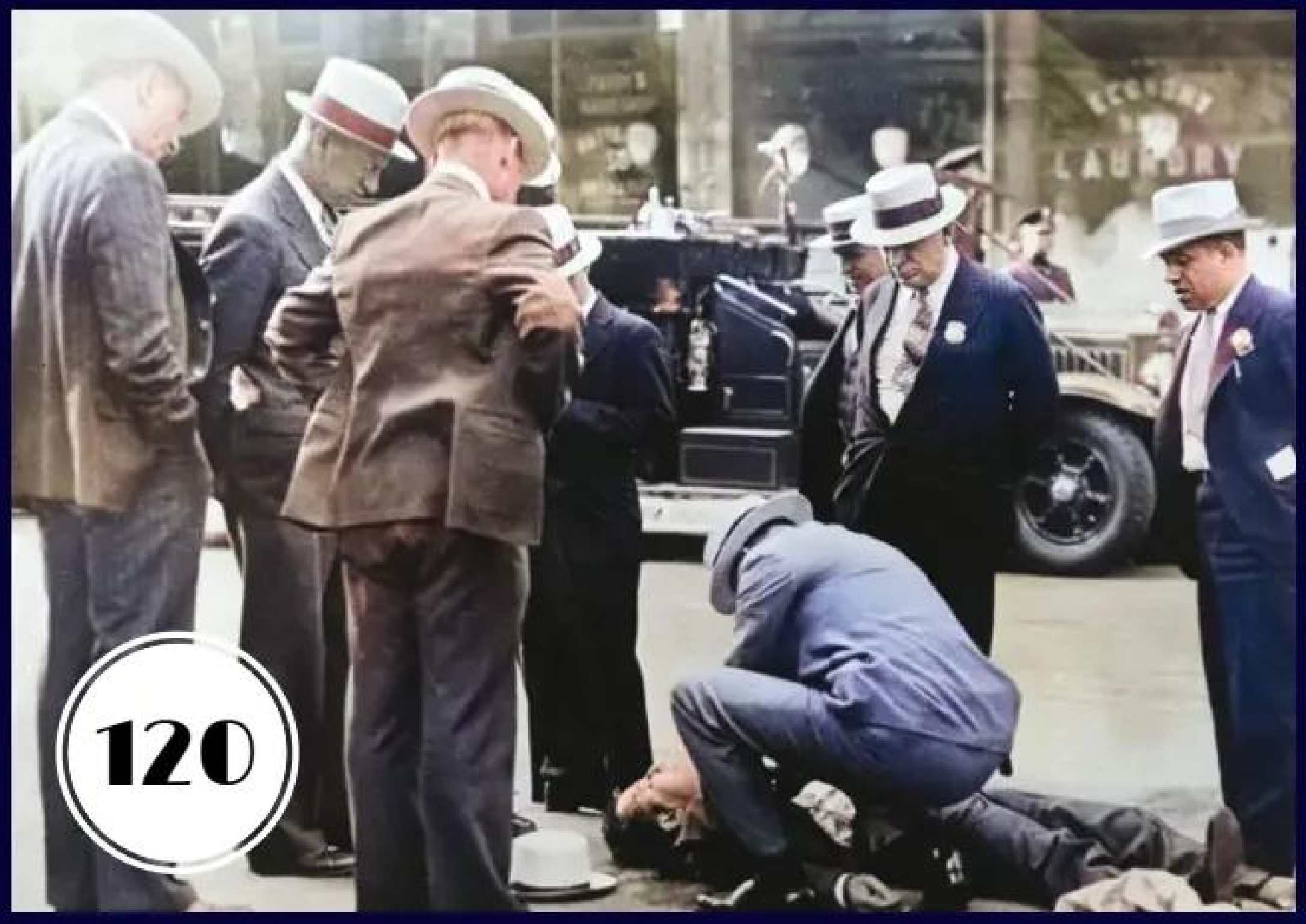

Alamy, Getty Images

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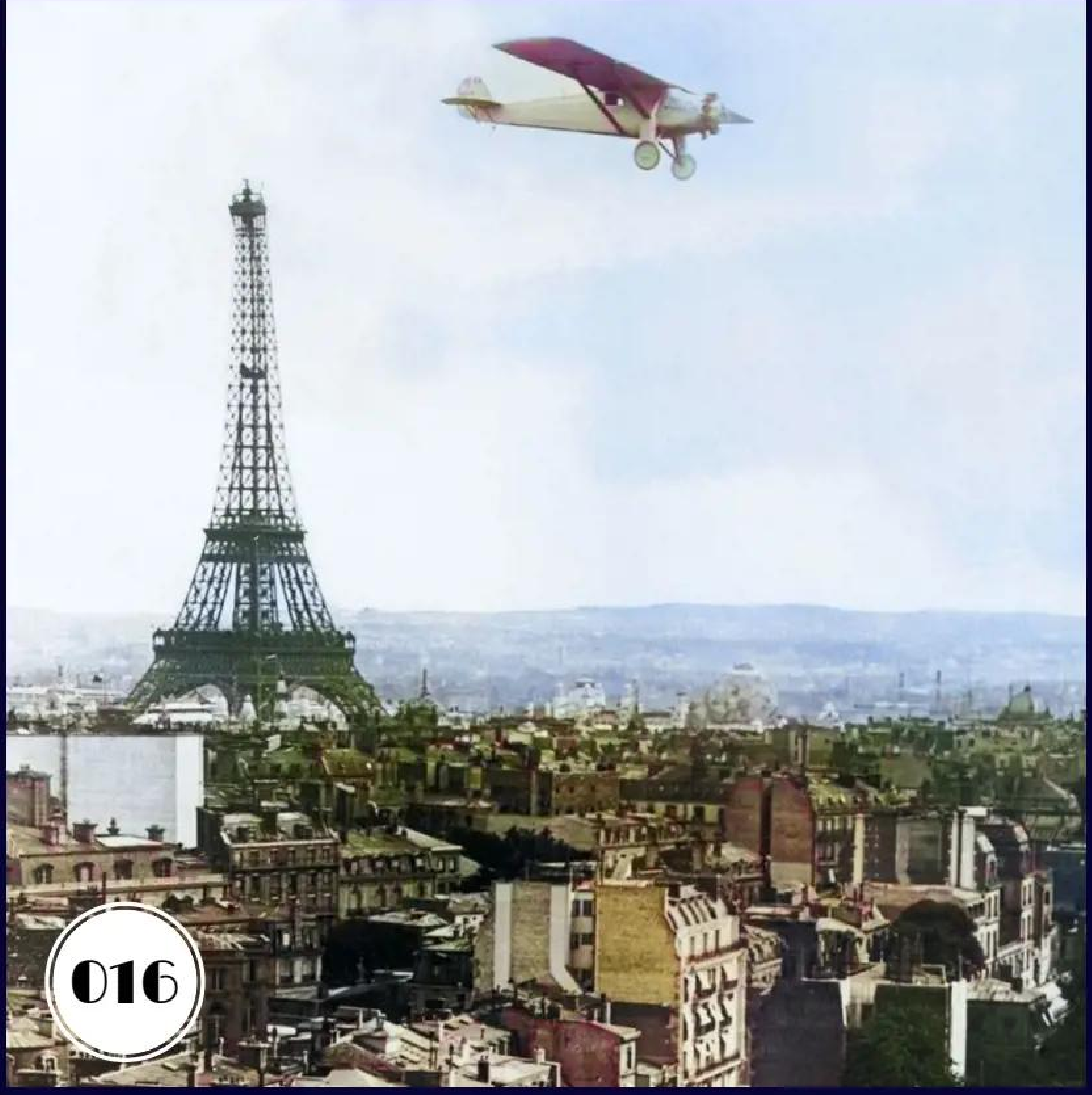
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WHEN THE WORLD ROARED

THE ROARING TWENTIES WAS AN ERA OF HIGHS AND LOWS - FROM INCREDIBLE INNOVATIONS TO FINANCIAL WOES

WORDS: NELL DARBY

The 1910s had been defined by war and loss of life on a scale that is hard to believe. World War I had had a major impact on European society - from women taking up jobs while men were fighting, to men returning home (if they returned at all) to changed families and communities. It was no wonder that the 1920s were seen as a chance to start again - to enjoy life to its fullest. It was an era where optimism was the prevalent mood, and modernity felt like it had arrived. Technological advances and inventions made life far more fun – at least, for those who could afford it. Yet under the surface, tensions were brewing, which would lead to the decade ending in economic disaster.

The 1920s was a technological era. The Western world was agog at tales of those who embraced challenge, wanting to push themselves to the limits of both their talents and of the era. Aviation was one the areas which developed in the 1920s, and it is no coincidence that in 1928, Charles Lindbergh was made *Time* magazine's Man of the Year. The year before, he had made the first nonstop flight from New York City to Paris, piloting his plane, the Spirit of St Louis. This was the first solo transatlantic flight, and this, plus Lindbergh's promotion of the aviation industry, caught the public's interest.

On the ground, the motor industry had already grown since the production of the Ford Model T was introduced back in 1908. The car offered the middle classes a form of affordable transport, and was incredibly popular. When it was introduced, nearly 11,000 cars were produced in its first year. By 1924, over a million Model Ts were being produced each year, with the price having dropped to $265 (in its first two years, it cost nearly three times this amount). Ford stopped producing the Model T in 1927, replacing it with the Model A – a car that was produced in four different colours and several styles. Within 18 months of its launch, two million Model As had been sold.

Getty Images, Creative Commons Wiki

Agents pour illegal liquor into sewer following a raid during the height of Prohibition

20s TIMELINE

PROHIBITION

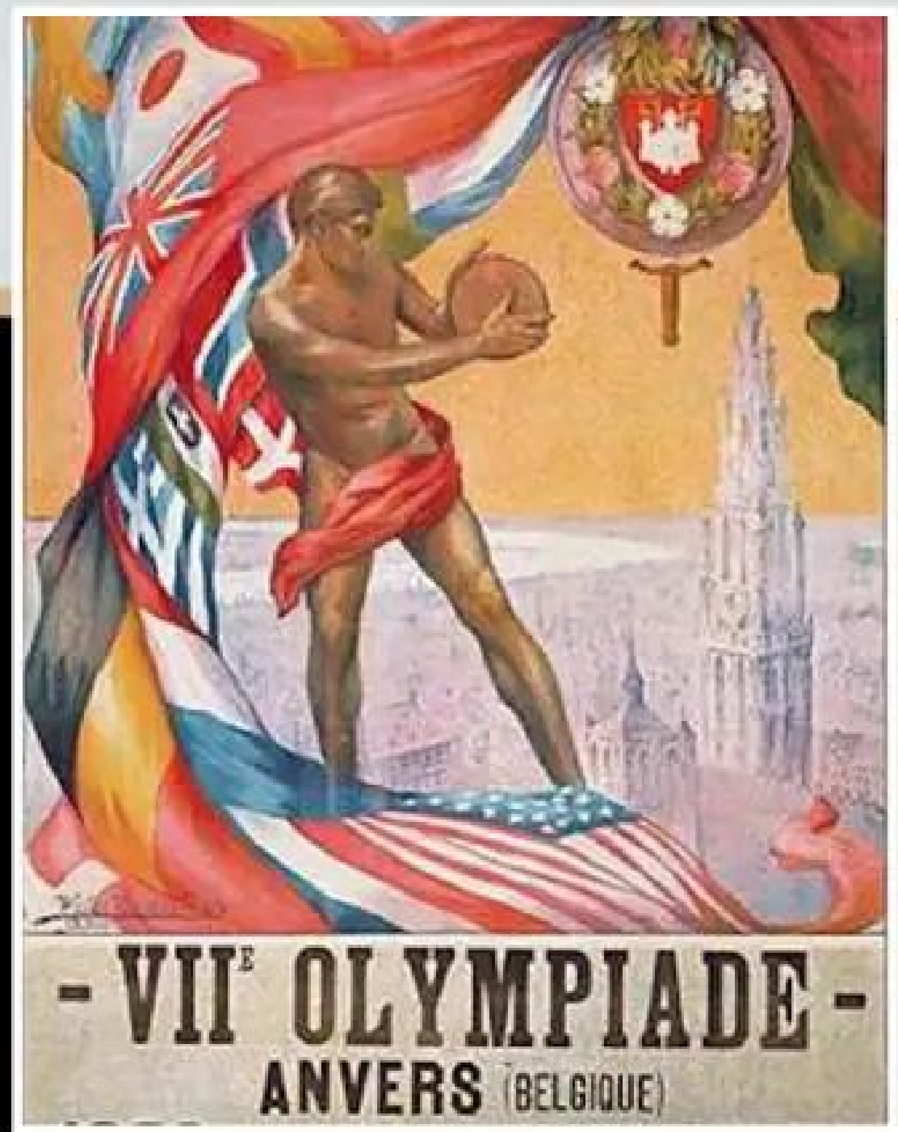
17 January 1920

After the 18th Amendment to the Constitution is passed, Prohibition comes into effect in the US – but people still find ways to drink.

THE OLYMPICS

20 April 1920

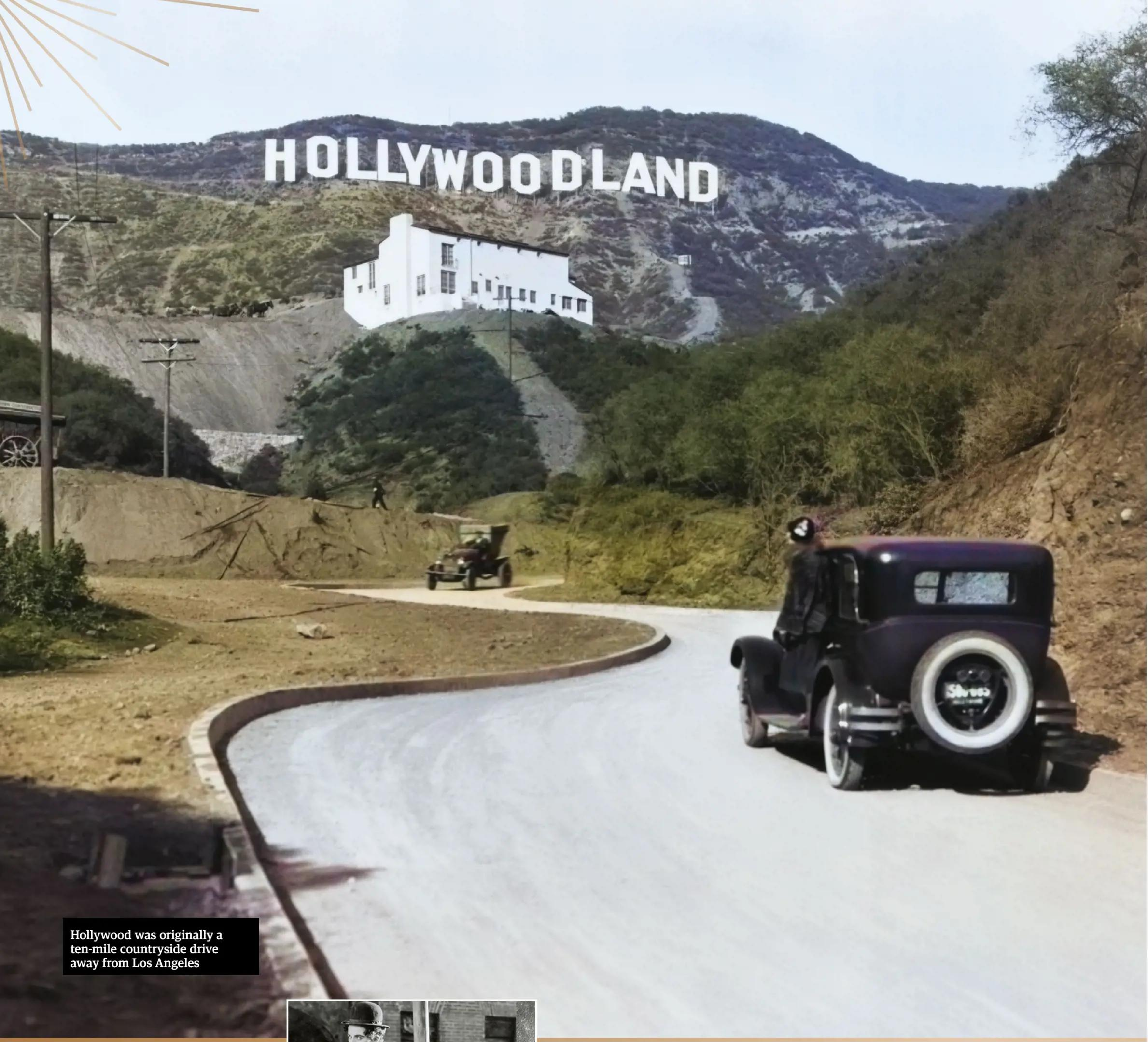
The 1920 Olympics start on this date. They are held in Antwerp, in order to acknowledge the suffering of Belgium during World War 1.



REMEMBERING THE DEAD

11 November 1920

The Cenotaph, a national memorial to WW1 dead, and designed by Sir Edward Lutyens, is unveiled in London. It replaces another, temporary, structure.



Hollywood was originally a ten-mile countryside drive away from Los Angeles

1921

CHAPLIN'S LATEST

21 January 1921

The Kid, Charlie Chaplin's silent comedy-drama, is released. It stars six-year-old child star Jackie Coogan alongside Chaplin's character The Tramp.

ARTISTIC ICON

7 February 1921

An exhibition of the works of photographer Alfred Stieglitz opens in New York. Some images feature his muse, and future wife, artist Georgia O'Keeffe.

BIRTH CONTROL

17 March 1921

Marie Stopes opens the first British birth control clinic in London. It is formally known as the Mothers' Clinic for Constructive Birth Control.

NAZI LEADER

29 July 1921

Adolf Hitler becomes leader of the Nazi Party in Germany, just two years after joining its precursor, the German Workers' Party.

Getty Images, Creative Commons WIKI

A WIDER WORLD

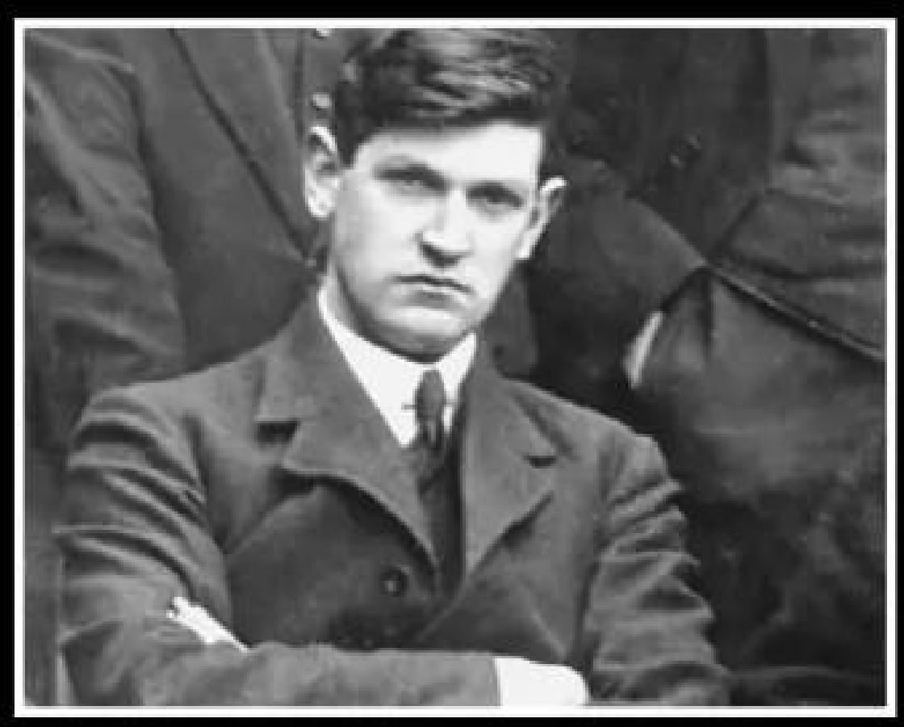
There were now several forms of transport to enable people to travel. However, even life at home was more exciting than previously – and the world was opened up to people in a variety of ways. The BBC began radio services in 1922, initially as the British Broadcasting Company Ltd. At this time, it was commercially operated, and included sponsored programmes. Its first daily broadcast was on 14 November 1922 at 6pm, starting with a news bulletin, followed by a weather forecast. On 1 January 1927, the BBC became the British Broadcasting Corporation, established by Royal Charter. Radio was exciting, but the 1920s would end with an even more exciting development: that of television. In November 1929, John Logie Baird would broadcast television from a studio in London.

Although television was in its infancy, people in the 1920s had a well-established source of entertainment and information: the cinema. The decade saw a huge expansion in film-making, and the 'shorts' of the previous decade were largely replaced by longer feature films. The industry was becoming huge: large film studios were created from smaller ones, creating what became known as the studio system. Large cinemas – picture palaces – were built, which could accommodate audiences in their thousands. Cinema was popular with all ages, as picture-goers rushes to see the likes of Louise Brooks, Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin and Rudolph Valentino. Some film stars would soon see their careers falter, however, thanks to one major development – that of sound. The 'talkies' would change the face of cinema, requiring more dialogue than before. *The Jazz Singer*, released in 1927, featured singing and speech, and was the start of a new era in cinema. Celebrity culture had long existed, but the fan worship of actors and actresses was now concentrated on movie stars, with newspapers and magazines offering interviews and titbits of information to satiate the desires of their fans.

WHITE HOUSE RADIO

8 February 1922

Radio comes to the White House on this date – and four months later, President Warren G Harding makes his first radio speech.



IRISH CIVIL WAR

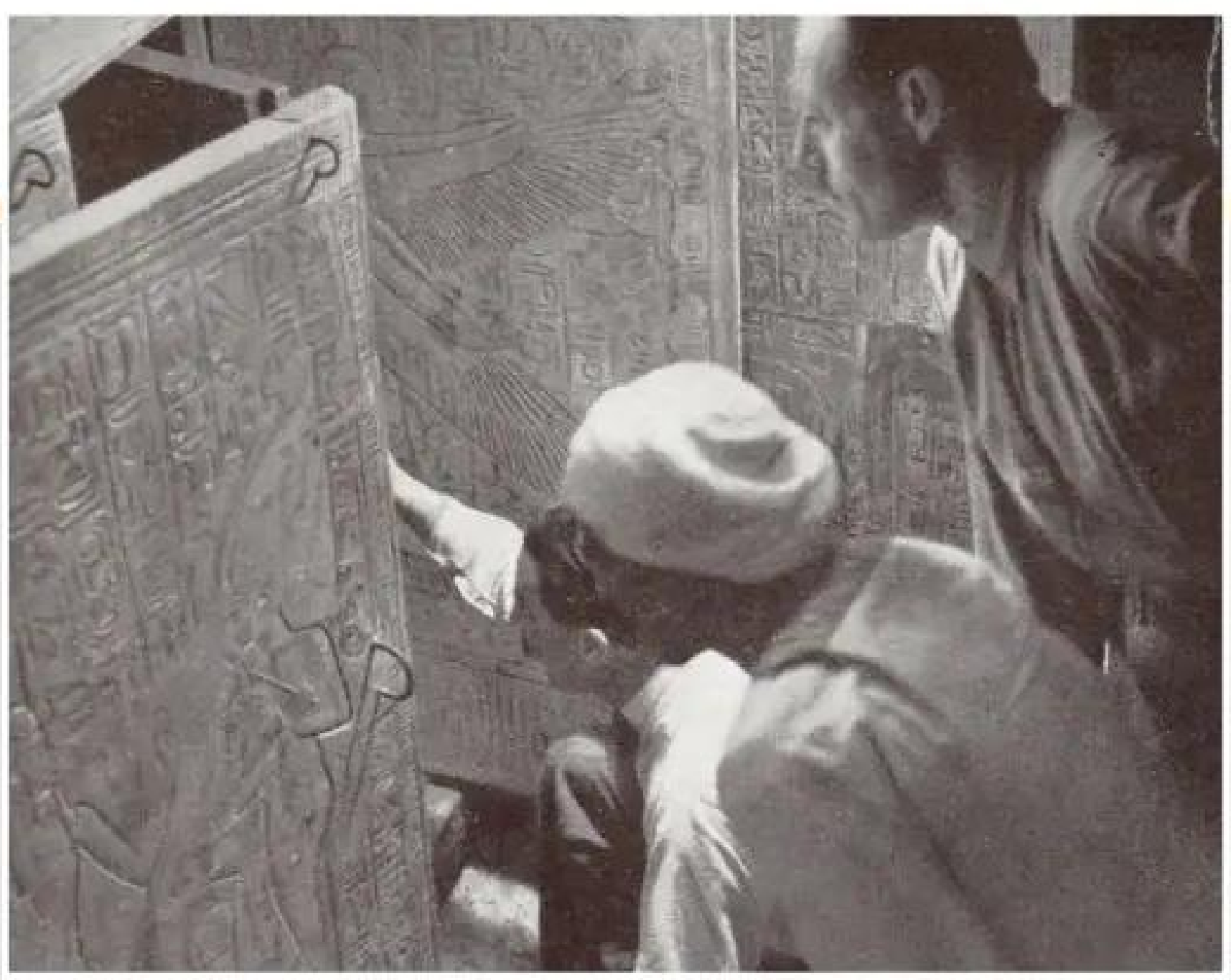
22 August 1922

During the Irish Civil War, 31-year-old Michael Collins, the chair of the Provisional Government, is killed in an ambush in County Cork.

TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB DISCOVERED

4 November 1922

The entrance to the pharaoh Tutankhamun's intact tomb in the Valley of the Kings, Egypt, is discovered by archaeologist and Egyptologist Howard Carter.



1923

ROYAL MARRIAGE

26 April 1923

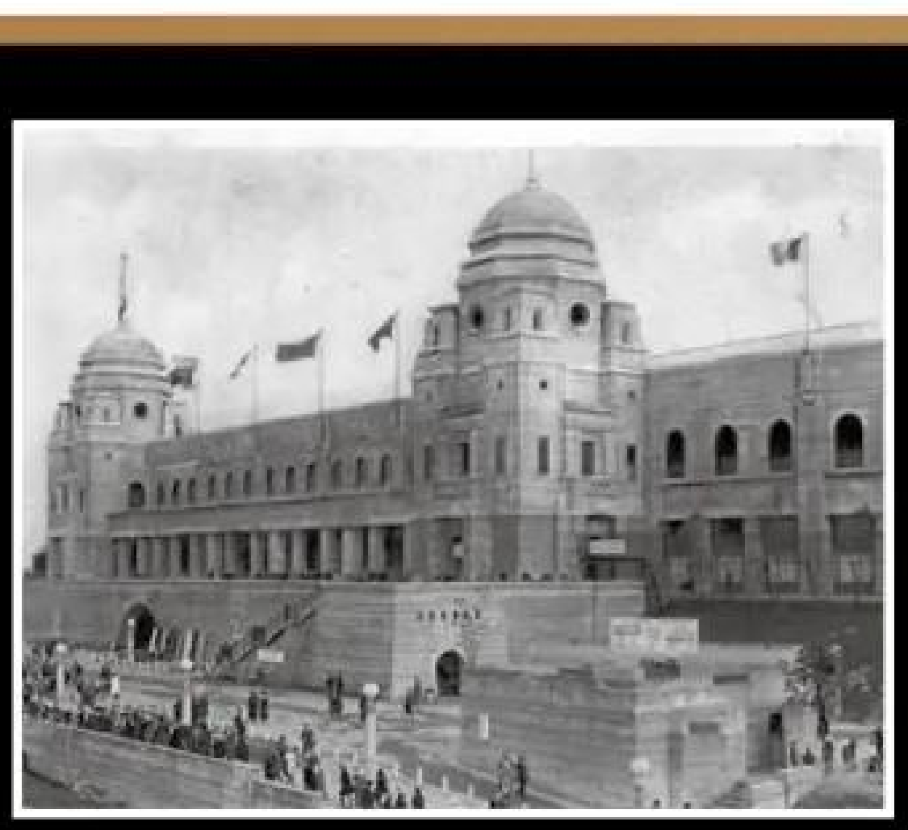
The Duke of York marries Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon; they later become known as George VI and Queen Elizabeth (known, from 1952, as the Queen Mother).

Jazz originated with the African American communities in the Deep South, including Louisiana, and gave its name to an age

FREEDOM AND RESTRICTION

Other forms of artistic expression also saw change, development or even revolution. The 1920s has become known as the Jazz Age, and this phrase conjures up images of art, music, dance, drinking and enjoyment. Jazz music started in the Black American communities of the USA's southern states. It enabled musicians to play in a looser, more expressive way, and became popular with the young in particular. New forms of artistic expression appeared, such as Surrealism and Expressionism. German Expressionism was to be found not only in art but in film, with *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1920) and *Nosferatu* (1922) being just two examples. The first Surrealist Manifesto was published in 1924, with Paris being the centre of the movement. Surrealism was found not just in art – with the works of Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel being prime examples – but in dance, literature, and music as well.

This freedom of artistic expression was in contrast to forms of control the US government exerted over the country. Between 1920 and 1933, alcohol was banned. It could not be produced, imported, or sold, in an act that was known as Prohibition. Yet people disregarded the ban, and this led to criminal gangs and gangsters, including Al Capone, taking on the illegal supply of beer and liquor for profit. A vast amount of money was made by smuggling illegal alcohol across borders. Speakeasies – illicit bars selling alcohol – were established and proved popular, despite many being run by the gangs. They were often raided, and people risked arrest by visiting them, but they continued to be profitable.



WEMBLEY STADIUM OPENS

28 April 1923

The original Wembley Stadium, also known as the Empire Stadium, opens to the public – it is the centrepiece of the British Empire Exhibition.

THE CHARLESTON CRAZE

29 October 1923

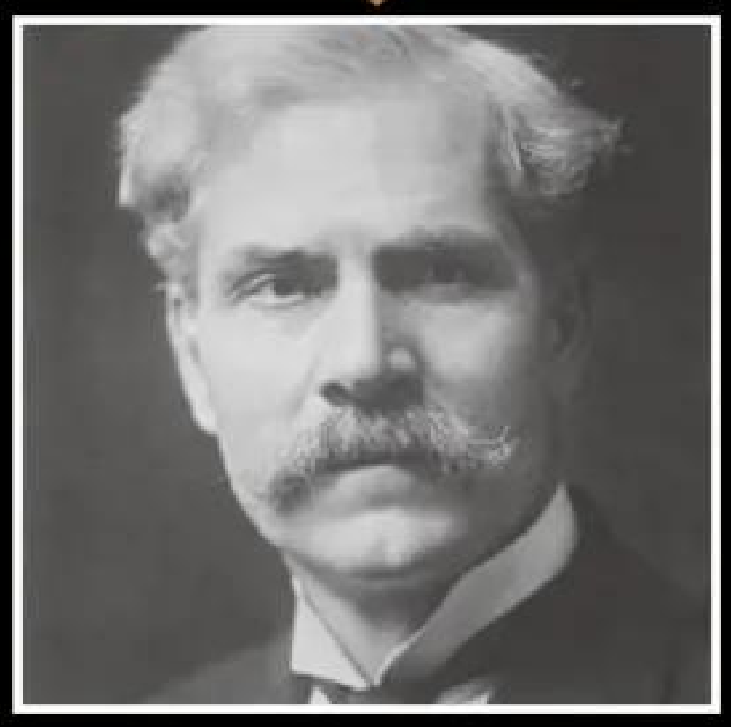
The Broadway show *Runnin' Wild* starts. It includes a jazz tune written to accompany the Charleston dance, and as a result, the dance then becomes a huge craze.

BEER HALL PUTSCH

8-9 November 1923

A failed coup d'état, the Beer Hall Putsch, takes place in Munich, resulting in the deaths of 16 Nazis and four police officers

1924



FIRST LABOUR PM

22 January 1924

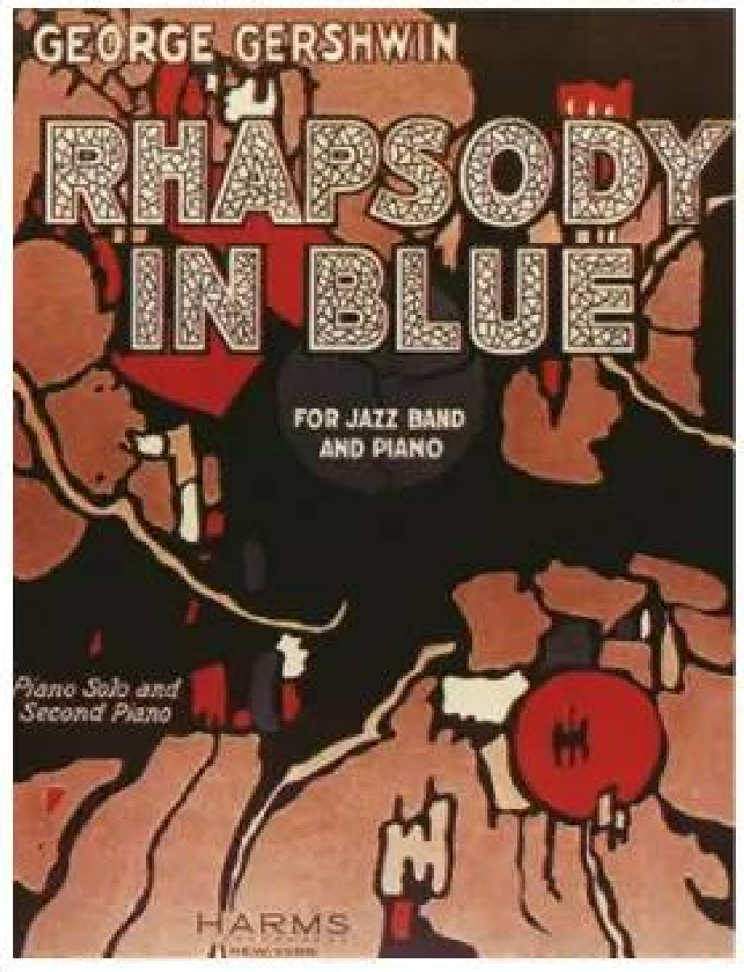
Ramsay MacDonald becomes the UK's first Labour Prime Minister, when the political party forms a minority government which lasts for just nine months.

Getty Images, Creative Commons WIKI

A RHAPSODY FOR THE AGE

12 February 1924

The premiere of George Gershwin's haunting *Rhapsody in Blue* takes place in New York City, with 25-year-old Gershwin on piano.


GEORGE GERSHWIN
RHAPSODY IN BLUE
FOR JAZZ BAND AND PIANO
Piano Solo and Second Piano
HARMS

MISSING CLIMBERS

8 June 1924

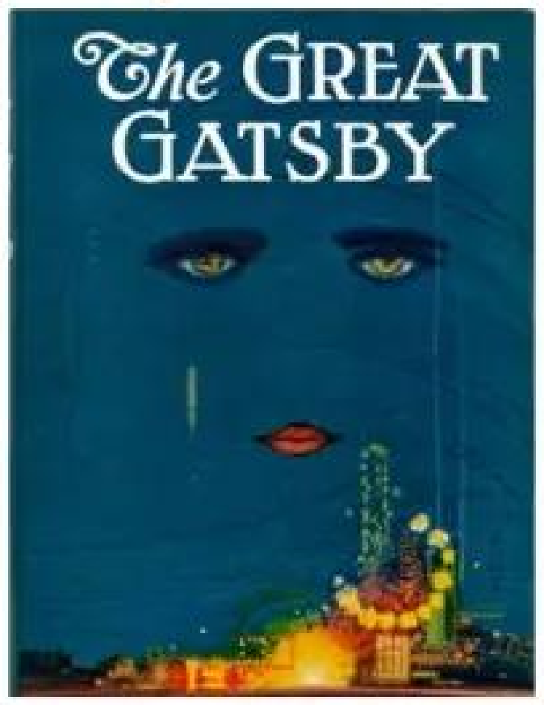
At 12.50pm, British mountaineers George Mallory and Andrew Irvine are seen for the last time, as they head for the summit of Mount Everest.

1925

MGM FORMED

17 April 1924

The movie company Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) is formed in Los Angeles. One of its creators is Irving Thalberg, a producer known as the 'Boy Wonder'.


The GREAT GATSBY

THE GREAT GATSBY

10 April 1925

F Scott Fitzgerald's famous Jazz Age novel, *The Great Gatsby,* is published. It is inspired by parties the American author attended on Long Island.

International Winter Sports Week, Chamonix 1924, was the birth of the Winter Olympics

RADIO INAUGURATION

March 1925

In Washington, Calvin Coolidge is sworn in as president following the 1924 election. His is the first presidential inauguration to be broadcast on radio.

SURREAL EXHIBITION

13 November 1925

The first art exhibition of Surrealist works opens at the Galerie Pierre in Paris. The exhibition includes works by Picasso, Man Ray and Paul Klee.

1926

ROCKET MAN

16 March 1926

The world's first liquid-fuel rocket is launched in Auburn, Massachusetts by physicist and inventor Robert H Goddard. The rocket uses gasoline and liquid oxygen.

ON STRIKE

4 May 1926

The General Strike starts in the UK, aimed at preventing wage reductions and poor conditions for miners. It lasts nine days, but ends in defeat.

Getty Images, Creative Commons WIKI

A MODERN AGE

The modernity of the era was evident in fashion. The long skirts and restrictive corsetry of women's clothing in the Edwardian era was now replaced with shorter, looser, clothing. Women also started to cut their long hair. In the early 1920s, they might experiment with short hair by simply pinning their long hair up, but as time went on, many more started to bob their hair, and Louise Brooks, with her sharp bob, epitomised the style of the era. Other braver women went a step further, cutting their hair into the severe Eton crop. Fashion magazines enabled women to find inspiration, and even patterns to use to make their own versions of fashionable clothing.

Psychoanalysis predated the era, but in the 1920s, Freud published works looking at issues such as the ego and anxiety. Sexuality was being investigated, and this work by psychoanalysts echoed the increased sexual freedoms of the era. Sport offered not only the opportunity to keep fit, but also to support a team or individual athlete, in a similar way to how people might have a favourite actress. Baseball was popular in the States, with Lou Gehrig having signed up for the Yankees in 1923. In the UK, the Football League saw Liverpool become champions in both the 1921-22 and 1922-23 seasons.

The Olympic Games were traditionally held every four years in the summer, but in 1924, the first Winter Olympics were held in Chamonix, France. There were also several health advances in the 1920s. These ranged from a newer test for syphilis to the discovery of penicillin. In the US, funding for health clinics, and education for pregnant women and mothers, reduced infant mortality, while family planning clinics were opened, albeit with some controversy.

The fun and enjoyment of people in the 1920s ended abruptly. The Wall Street crash of October 1929, where $30 billion was wiped from the New York Stock Exchange, would impact not just America but the Western world, and led to the Great Depression of the next decade.

QUEEN OF THE WAVES

6 August 1926

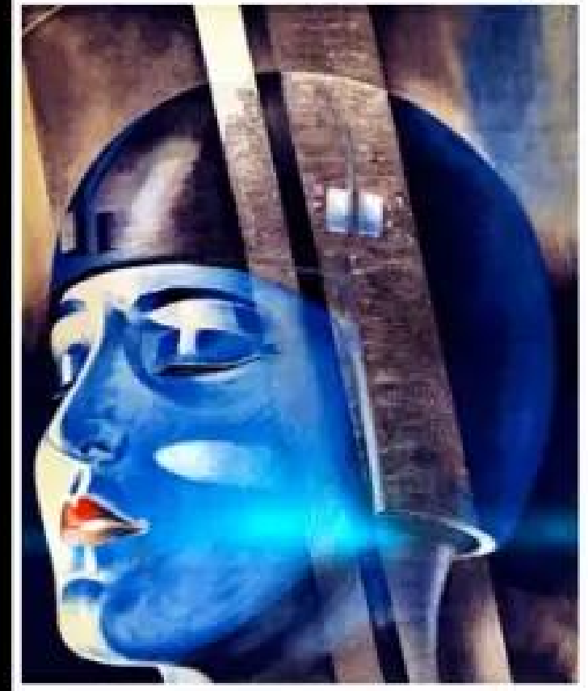
The first woman to swim the English Channel, American Gertrude Ederle, finishes her epic swim in a time of 14 hours and 34 minutes.

HEARTS BREAK FOR VALENTINO

23 August 1926

The 'Latin Lover', actor Rudolph Valentino, dies at the age of 31. A star of the silent era, his death causes mass hysteria among fans.

1927



BACK TO THE FUTURE

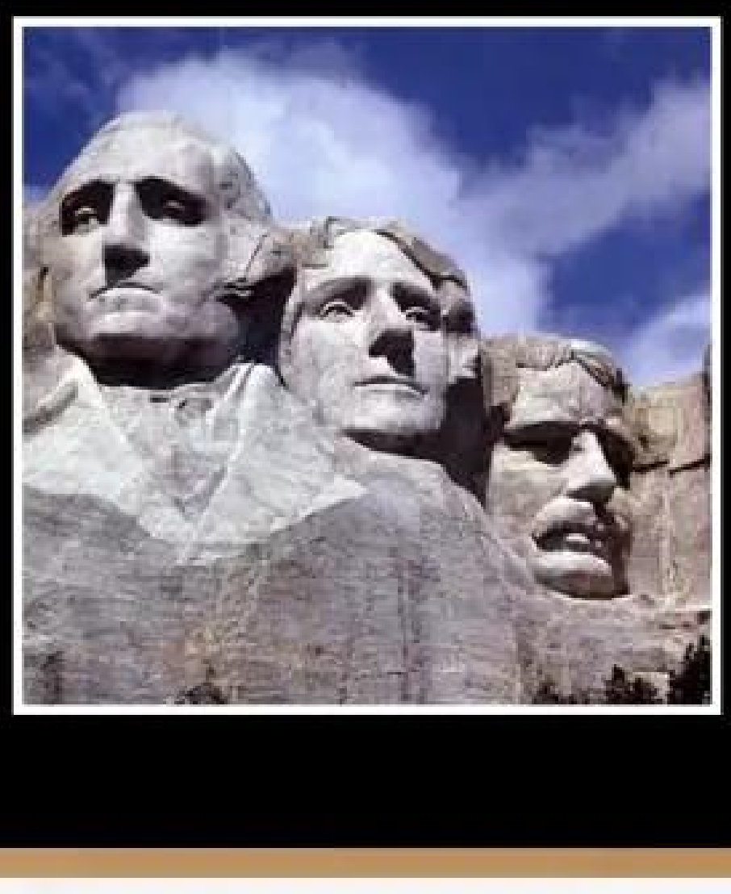
10 January 1927

Fritz Lang's Expressionistic and dystopian science fiction film *Metropolis* is released in Germany. It is now viewed as one of the greatest films ever made.

CHANGE OF SCENE

9 May 1927

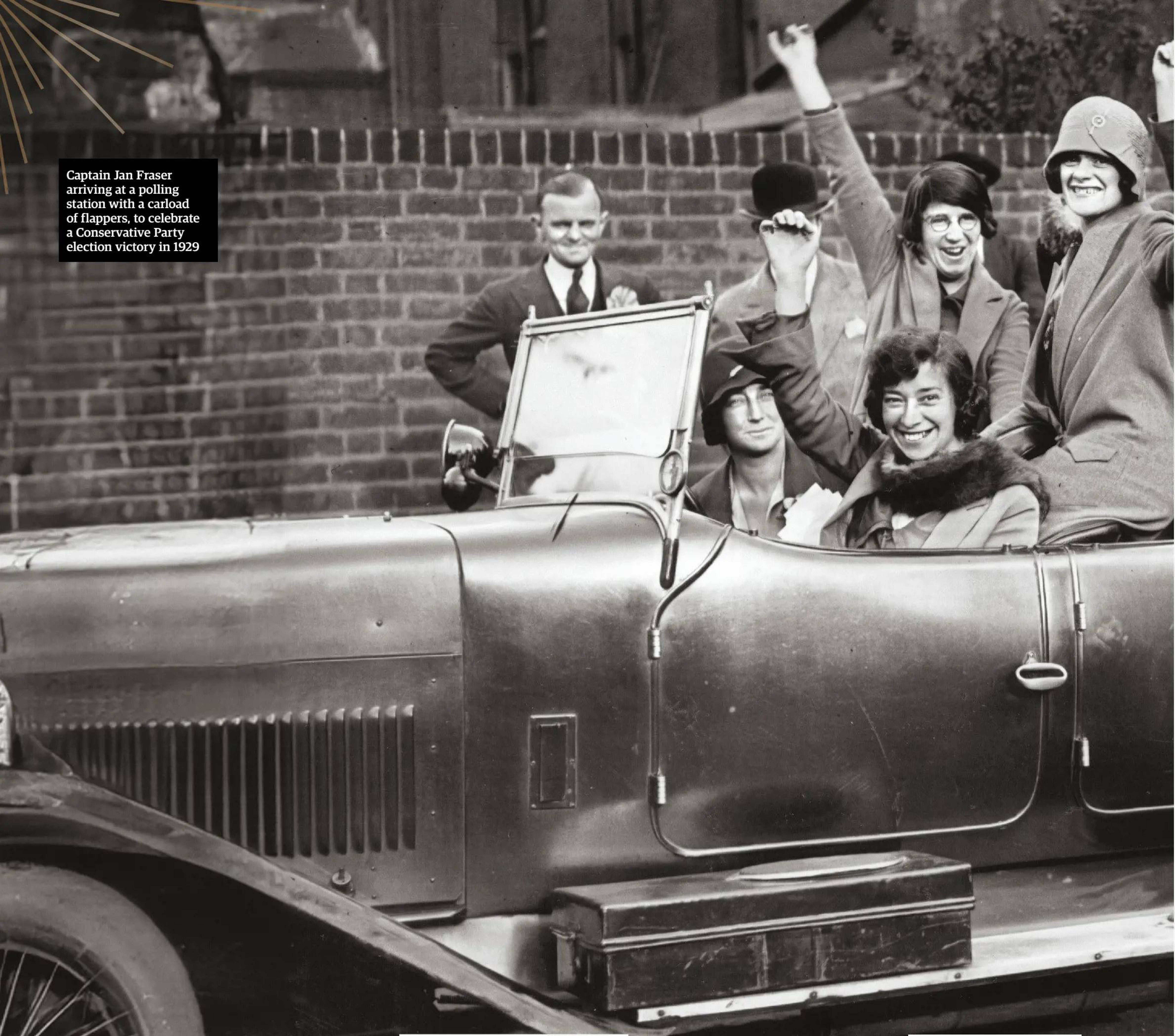
The Australian government moves from Melbourne to Canberra, with the Parliament convening for the first time in the Australian Capital Territory on this day.



PRESIDENTS' HEADS

4 October 1927

The carving of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial, featuring 60-foot-tall representations of four US Presidents' heads, begins in South Dakota.



Captain Jan Fraser arriving at a polling station with a carload of flappers, to celebrate a Conservative Party election victory in 1929

A FLYING SUCCESS

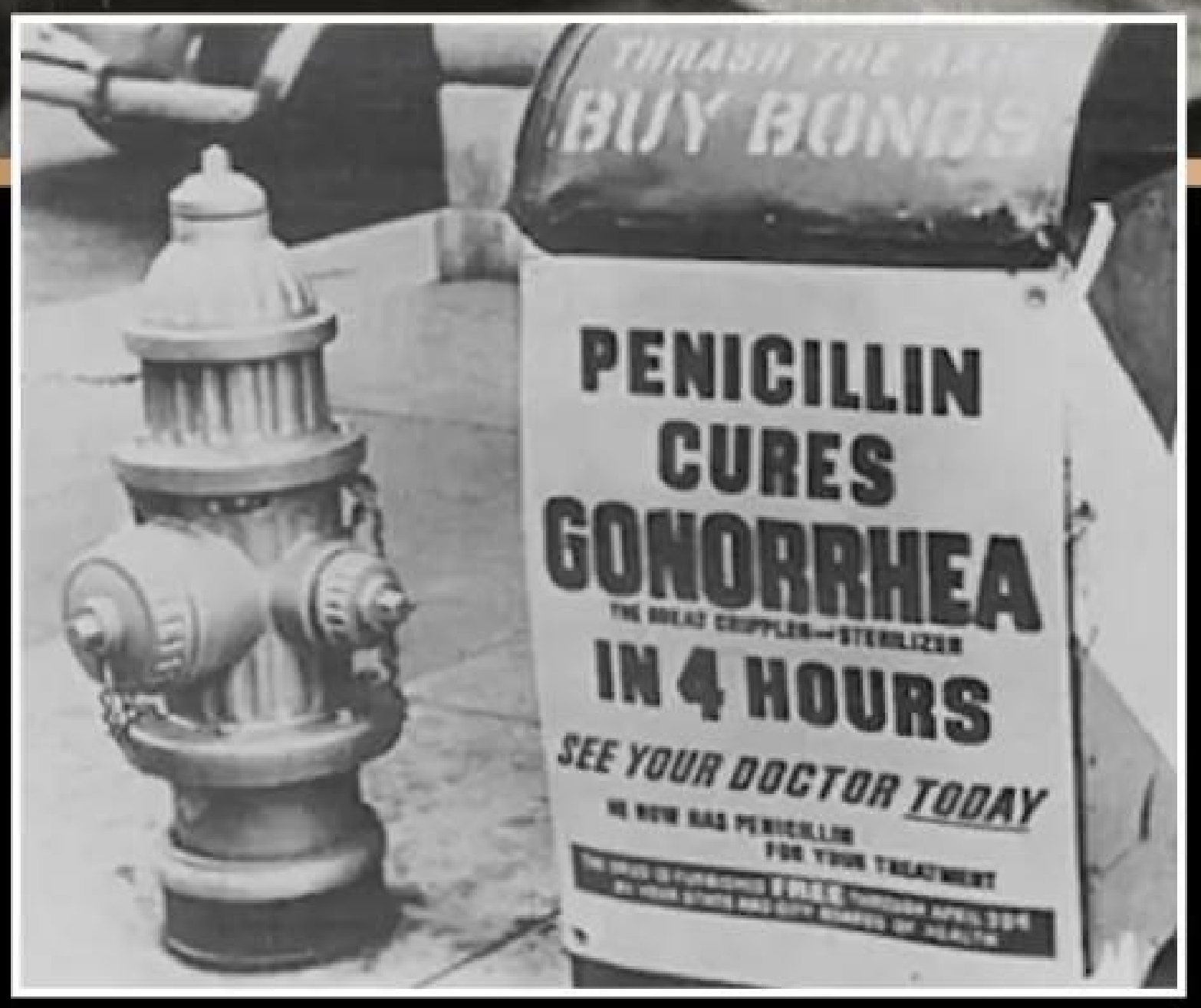
17-18 June 1928

Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to make a successful transatlantic flight, as part of a three-person crew flying from Canada to Wales.

A DOSE OF MEDICINE

28 September 1928

By chance, at his workplace, St Mary's Hospital in London, Scots physician and microbiologist Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin – the world's first antibiotic.



OBSCENITY TRIAL

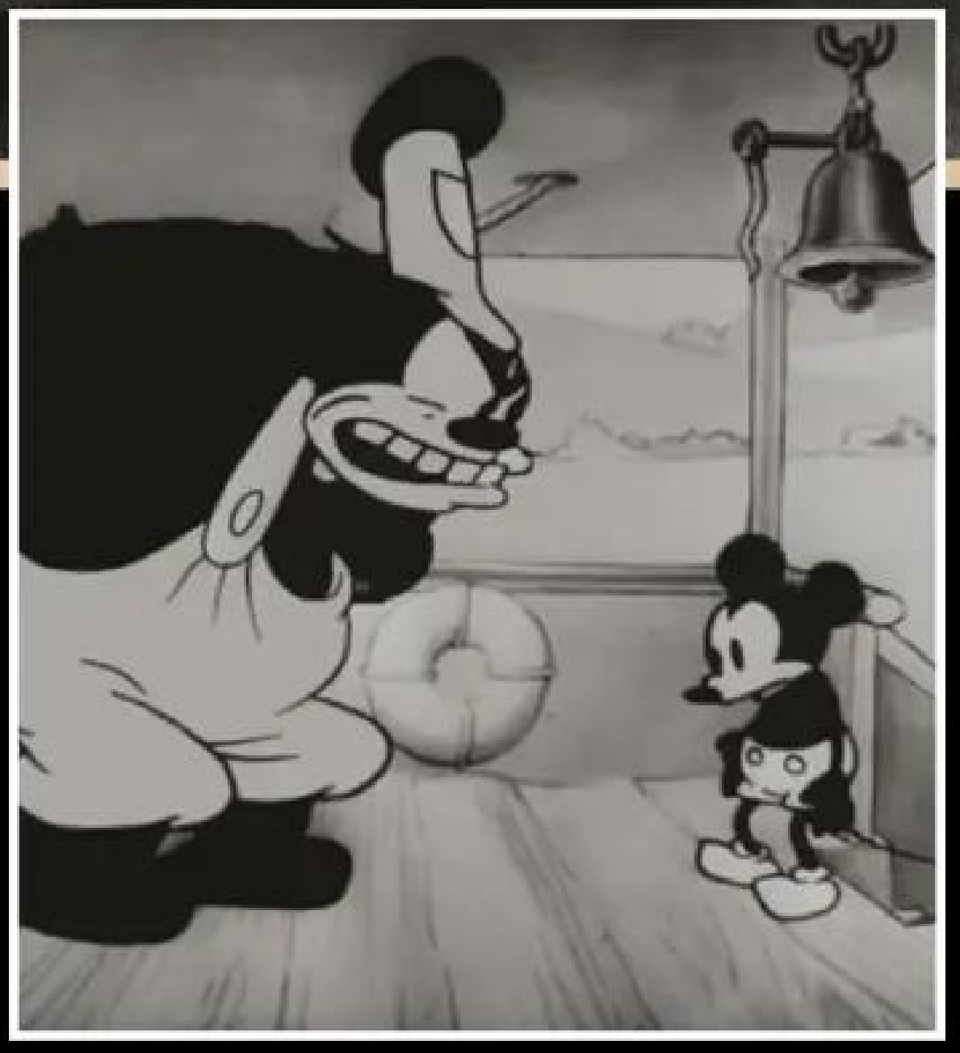
9 November 1928

The British and French publishers of lesbian novel *The Well Of Loneliness*, by Radclyffe Hall, are prosecuted for obscenity at London's Bow Street Magistrates Court.

MICKEY MOUSE ON BOARD

18 November 1928

Animated short film *Steamboat Willie* premieres in New York. One of the first cartoons with synchronised sound, it is seen as Mickey Mouse's debut.



Getty Images, Creative Commons WIKI

Pioneering pilot Amelia Earhart would later go missing in the air

1929

THE OSCAR GOES TO…

16 May 1929

The first Academy Awards, now informally known as the Oscars, are presented at LA's Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. Janet Gaynor receives the Best Actress award.

THE FLAPPERS VOTE

30 May 1929

The 'Flapper' General Election is held – so-called as it is the first British election where young women aged 21 and upwards can vote.

ZEPPELIN ZOOMS

8 August 1929

The German airship Graf Zeppelin starts a three-week round-the-world flight, and in the process, offers the first flight commercial passenger flight across the Atlantic.

MODERN AGE, MODERN ART

7 November 1929

The Museum of Modern Art opens in Manhattan. Conceived by three wealthy women, including Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, it opens days after the Wall Street Crash.

THE RISE OF TECHNOLOGY

FROM AVIATION AND THE AUTOMOBILE TO DAILY APPLIANCES AND ELECTRIC ENTERTAINMENT, TECHNOLOGY TOOK OFF IN THE 20s

WORDS: **DAVID CROOKES**

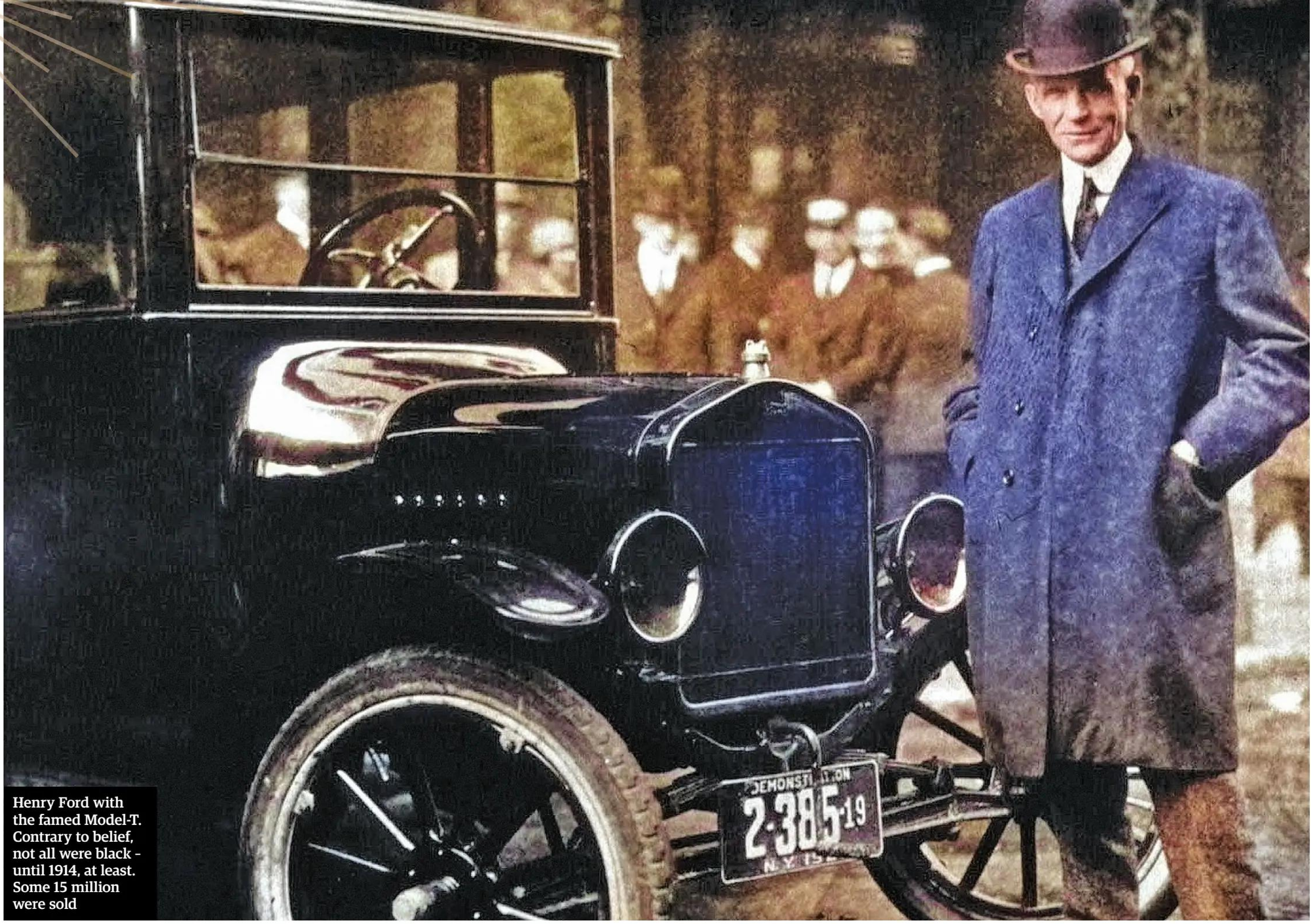
Throughout the 1920s, there was a notable boom in the use of electricity. In 1920, only 35 per cent of households in the US had been electrified, but this rose to 68 per cent by the end of the decade, with the uptake proving particularly high in urban areas. As you can imagine, the impact on life was huge. It wasn't simply a case of providing an alternative source for light either. Fridges became popular, helping to keep food fresh for longer. Washing machines began to take away the drudgery of keeping clothes clean. Electric razors, dishwashers, irons and ovens were also highly sought after. By reducing the time it took to complete household chores, such technologies freed up lots of time for leisure and people's lives were vastly improved as a result.

One of the consequences was a boom in cinema, to the extent that, by the end of the 1920s, around 90 million people in the US were watching movies each week. As the decade wore on, film fans could enjoy the "talkies" – movies containing speech – made possible thanks to the introduction of synchronised sound. People were also able to take their place in larger-sized urban theatres built to cope with viewing demand which led to projection equipment being adapted to ensure everyone could see the action on a decent-sized screen. Non-electric limelight illumination was consigned to the bin as movie theatres switched to high illumination, electricity-powered carbon arc lamps. Since electric power meant factories could become more efficient, leading to the introduction of assembly lines and conveyor belts, it paved the way for the mass production of consumer items which saw prices drop and demand for goods rise. One of the most popular products were radio sets, which fell in price from around $200 at the start of the decade to $35 by the end, with large numbers of broadcasters emerging to cater for the inevitable rise in listeners. People were brought together by the rising popularity of radio, and they'd listen to the likes of the US's first commercial radio station, KDKA in Pittsburgh, set up in 1920, and the BBC in the UK which was established in 1922. Radio quickly became a hub for news and entertainment and it had a major effect on culture and language wherever it proved popular.

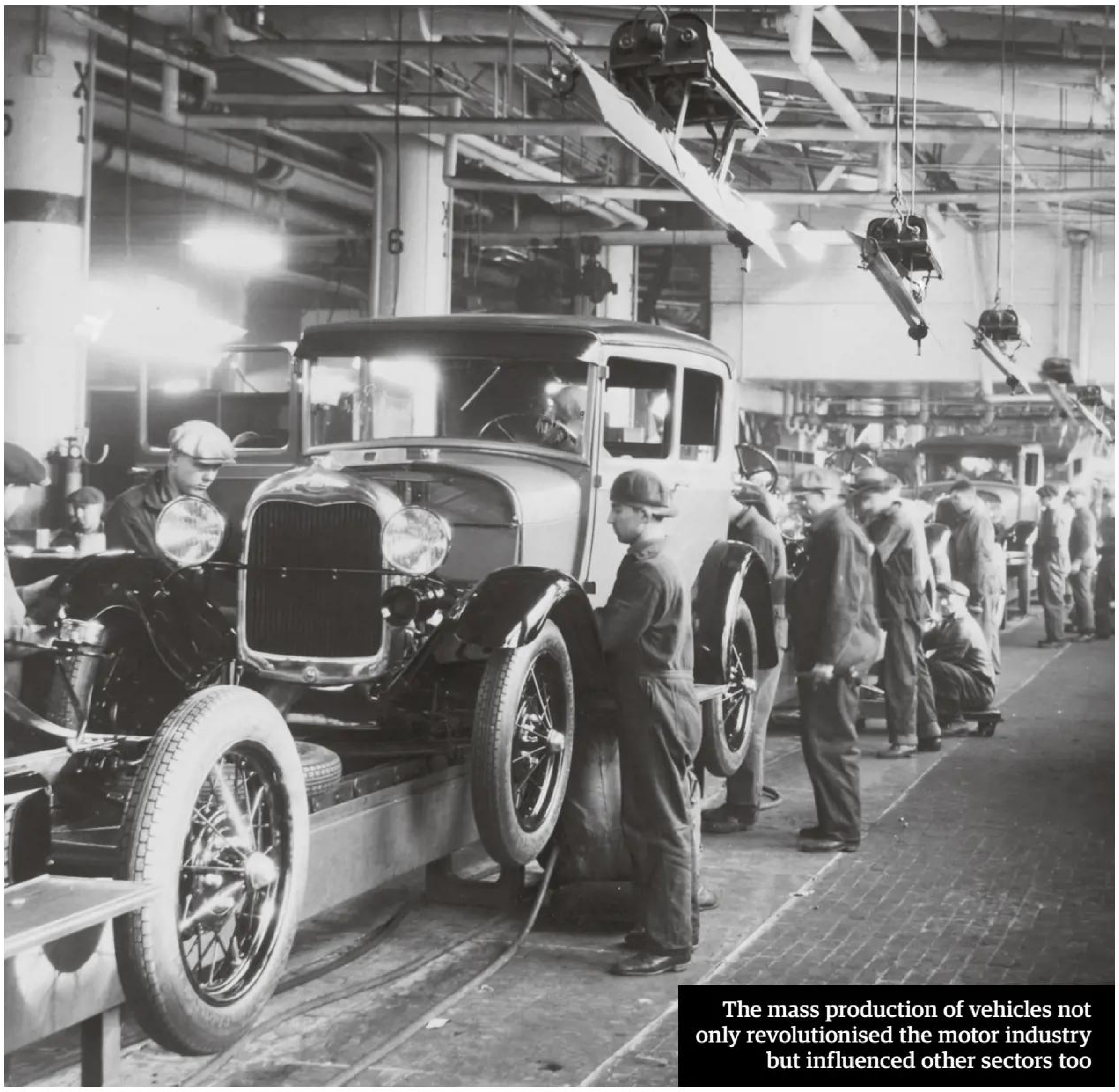
"It shoots off the grease!"

Getty Images

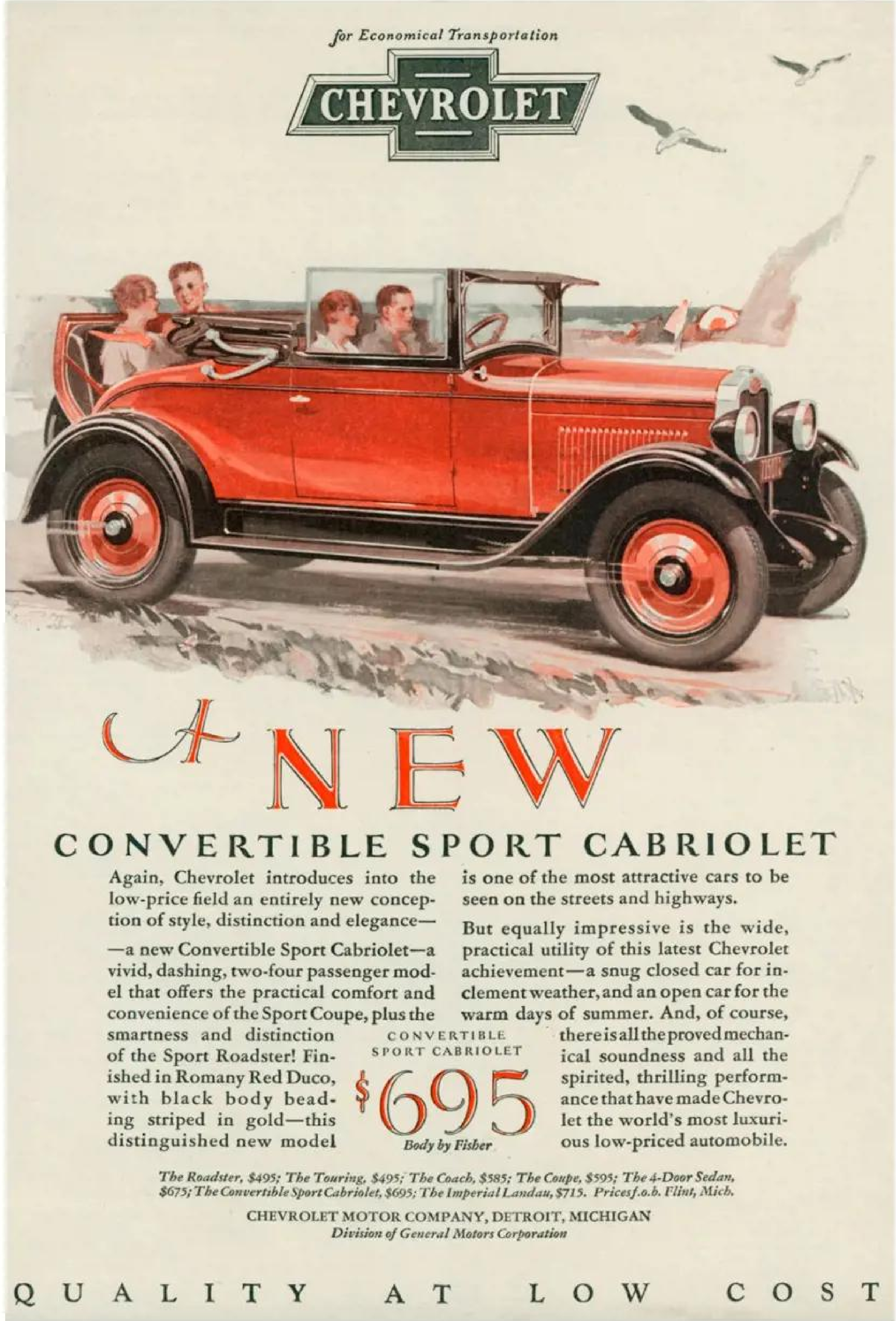
Inventions such as the dishwasher freed up time for leisure which changed the way people lived



Henry Ford with the famed Model-T. Contrary to belief, not all were black - until 1914, at least. Some 15 million were sold



The mass production of vehicles not only revolutionised the motor industry but influenced other sectors too



for Economical Transportation

CHEVROLET

A NEW

CONVERTIBLE SPORT CABRIOLET

Again, Chevrolet introduces into the low-price field an entirely new conception of style, distinction and elegance—

—a new Convertible Sport Cabriolet—a vivid, dashing, two-four passenger model that offers the practical comfort and convenience of the Sport Coupe, plus the smartness and distinction of the Sport Roadster! Finished in Romany Red Duco, with black body beading striped in gold—this distinguished new model is one of the most attractive cars to be seen on the streets and highways.

But equally impressive is the wide, practical utility of this latest Chevrolet achievement—a snug closed car for inclement weather, and an open car for the warm days of summer. And, of course, there is all the proved mechanical soundness and all the spirited, thrilling performance that have made Chevrolet the world's most luxurious low-priced automobile.

CONVERTIBLE SPORT CABRIOLET

$695

Body by Fisher

The Roadster, $495; The Touring, $495; The Coach, $585; The Coupe, $595; The 4-Door Sedan, $675; The Convertible Sport Cabriolet, $695; The Imperial Landau, $715. Prices f.o.b. Flint, Mich.

CHEVROLET MOTOR COMPANY, DETROIT, MICHIGAN
Division of General Motors Corporation

QUALITY AT LOW COST

Getty Images

DRIVING FORWARD

Mass production had a positive effect on many other sectors too, the primary one being the automobile industry, which actually introduced the concept. The Ford Motor Company, founded by Henry Ford in 1903, had achieved early success in its first four years of life following the launch of a range of vehicles: Model A through to Model S. In 1908, the Ford Model T was introduced with the aim of selling an affordable, easy-to-drive car that didn't compromise on quality.

It was to be a reliable vehicle for the working class. The Model K had cost motorists $2,700 – the equivalent to more than $90,000 today. The Model T, by contrast, was being sold for $850 (approximately $28,000) and the trick was to roll them off an efficient production line. Manufacturing was broken down into 84 steps and a set of workers would concentrate on one each. There was also investment in machines that could assist in the creation of the cars. By 1913, the factory introduced a moving assembly line that, a year later, was powered by a mechanised belt. Production time for a Model T car plummeted from 12 hours to 90 minutes. As each year went by, more and more people were buying a Model T – affectionately known as Tin Lizzie – to the point that, by the early 1920s, close to half of all registered cars were made by Ford. Such was the vehicle's popularity, there were about 10,000 Ford dealerships in the US by 1924 and, while production came to an end three years later, it wasn't until some 15 million Ford cars had been sold.

At this stage, the price was a very reasonable $260 ($9,000) since Ford had insisted on passing any manufacturing savings to its customers. Ford had also starkly shown the benefits of mass-production to both companies and consumers – by bringing driving to the masses, it played a major part in social change and it also ensured the US dominated the automotive industry. "It broke down the barriers of distance in rural sections, brought people of these sections closer together, and placed education within reach of everyone," Ford said at the time. Technology was being seen as a force for good. That said, it did have a negative impact on smaller motor companies. Those that didn't have the money to invest in expensive mass-production assembly lines simply went to the wall or were bought out, resulting in most of the market falling into the hands of a much smaller number of companies. These included Chrysler, which introduced a revolutionary six-cylinder vehicle in 1924 before creating a brand called Plymouth in 1928, which sought to compete in the affordable motor market. Chevrolet and General Motors also thrived. The latter was inspired by Ford to create a "unified assembly line" in 1926 where automated conveyors would move at all angles to bring parts to assembly stations, thereby allowing cars to be created in a single factory. Motor technology itself moved apace too, with front wheel and four wheel drive vehicles, and those powered by electricity, being introduced along with four-wheeled mechanical brakes that were adopted in nearly all vehicles by the end of the decade. Just as importantly, cars became more comfortable. Rather than be open to the elements, they started to be closed from around 1923 and luxury models were developed – Charles Rolls met Henry Royce in 1904 in Manchester, England, and their company continued to produce its Silver Ghost until 1926 before moving on to the Phantom 1 for the rest of the decade. Other notable 20s motors included the Packard Twin Six Roadster, the Falcon-Knight Roadster, the Nash Touring and the Studebaker Roadster, the Duesenberg Model A Touring Car, and the Hudson 7 Roadster. But in terms of travel, cars weren't the only technological innovations.

A Rolls-Royce Phantom I

TAKING OFF

The 1920s is widely known to be the Golden Age of Aviation. It was a period of great excitement when flight technology rapidly advanced and pioneers sought to push boundaries. In this post-war era, aeroplanes evolved from low-powered biplanes made out of wood – the likes of which had been flown by the Wright Brothers in 1903 – into high-powered planes with a single pair of wings typically made out of aluminium.

The Dutch airline KLM (the airline is the oldest continuously operating airline in the world) made its first flight on 17 May 1920 carrying two British journalists from Croydon Airport, London, to Amsterdam, the Netherlands. A Finnish airline called Aero O/Y flew between Helsinki, Finland, and Tallinn, Estonia, in 1924. Western Air Express, formed in 1925, was given the contract to carry airmail across the United States, while Pan American Airways was founded in 1927. Flying became even more attractive after 1927 when trailblazer Charles Lindbergh completed the first solo non-stop transatlantic flight in history, going from Long Island, New York to Paris, France, in his Spirit of St Louis plane. Hailed a hero, he went on to champion flights, helping to usher in the age of commercial aviation.

Before long, planes were being made specially for the carrying of around 20 or so passengers who would fly in unpressurised cabins during the day at a cruising altitude of 3,000 feet or less. It wasn't a particularly enjoyable experience with hindsight, since those on board needed to wrap up warm and endure a shaky ride, but they were fed, treated like royalty and got to experience a form of transport that had once felt like a pipe dream. Then, from 1929, night flights became possible due to the introduction of instruments and the industry took off, with millions taking the air over the course of the next decade. In some ways, it encapsulated the 1920s in a nutshell – a decade in which the groundwork was laid for a brighter future. It took a little time to adjust (after an economic boom, there was bust due, in some part, to technology costing jobs in some sectors). But 20s technology certainly proved transformative.

Spirit of St. Louis
NEW YO
CAP. CHARLE
RED CROWN A

Passengers boarding an American Airlines Curtiss Condor plane from the period

Getty Images

Charles Lindbergh promoted flight by embarking on the first solo nonstop transatlantic flight from Long Island, New York, to Paris, France

RK-PARIS FLIGHT
S LINDBERGH. RYAN MONOPLANE
VIATION GASOLINE
GARGOYLE
MOBILOIL "B"

THE ADVENTURES OF AMELIA EARHART

AFTER DEVELOPING A DESIRE TO FLY, THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN BECOME AN AVIATION PIONEER

Amelia Earhart was an explorer whose plane disappeared over the Pacific in 1937 during an attempt to become the first woman to fly around the globe. No one knows what happened to her and the mystery endures to this day but, although she presumably died aged 39, her life was nevertheless packed with adventure.

Born in Atchison, Kansas, US, in 1897, Earhart attended an air show on Long Beach, aged 22, and immediately vowed to fly a plane – doing so the following year and gaining an international pilot's licence from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) by 1923. In 1928, aged 31, she accompanied Wilmer Stultz on the world's second non-stop flight across the Atlantic Ocean, thereby becoming the first female passenger to make the journey by aeroplane.

Departing from Newfoundland, Canada, the flight took 20 hours 40 minutes to reach Burry Port in South Wales and Earhart became a hero. She used her status to promote commercial air travel and represented Transcontinental Air Transport in 1929 before following up her earlier feat with a 15-hour solo flight in 1932 from Newfoundland to Northern Ireland, which ensured she became the first woman to have flown solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

10 JANUARY 1927

FRITZ LANG'S METROPOLIS PREMIERES

The futuristic silent film *Metropolis* premiered in Berlin, Germany. The film, directed by Fritz Lang, went way over budget – costing around five million Reichsmarks – and took 15 months to shoot. Although it was criticised upon its release it's now widely regarded as the first great science-fiction film and one of the most influential films ever made.

© Alamy

THE BIRTH OF HOLLYWOOD

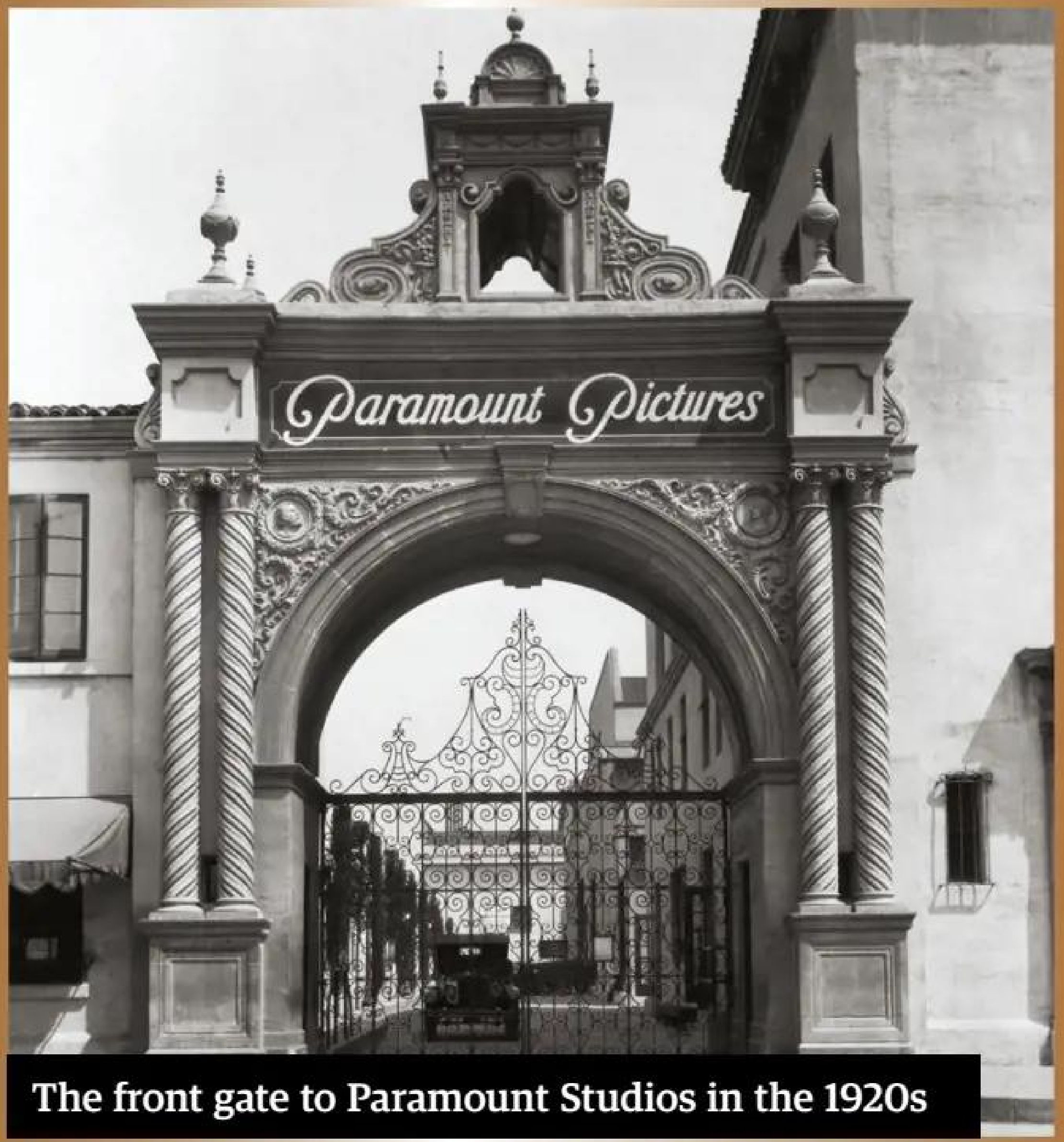
FROM THE MOST HUMBLE BEGINNINGS, A MOVIE-MAKING PARADISE SPRANG OUT OF AN UNREMARKABLE WEST COAST VILLAGE. IN TIME, HOLLYWOOD WOULD GROW TO BE THE HEART OF THE SILVER SCREEN DREAM FACTORY

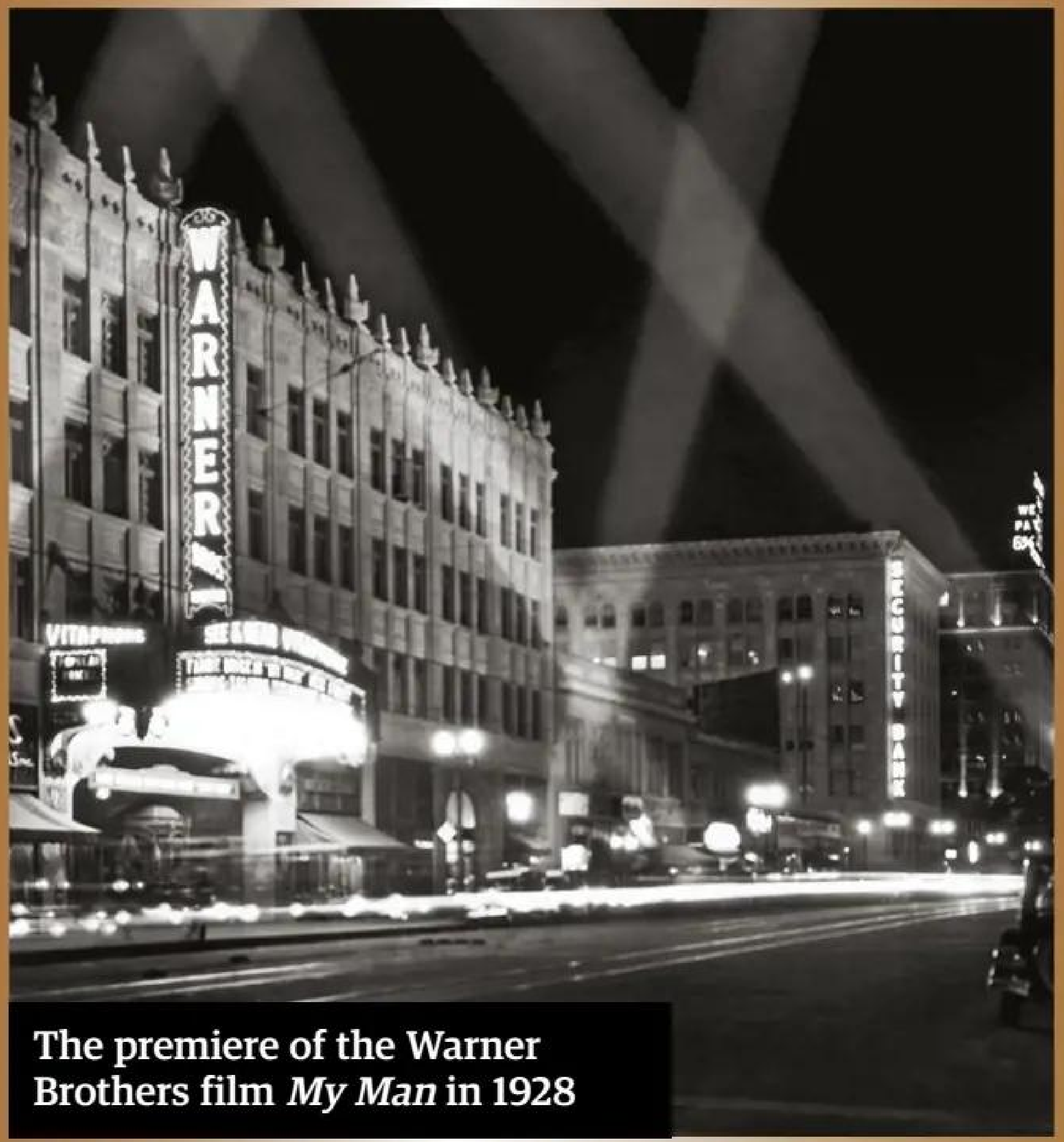
WORDS: CATHERINE CURZON

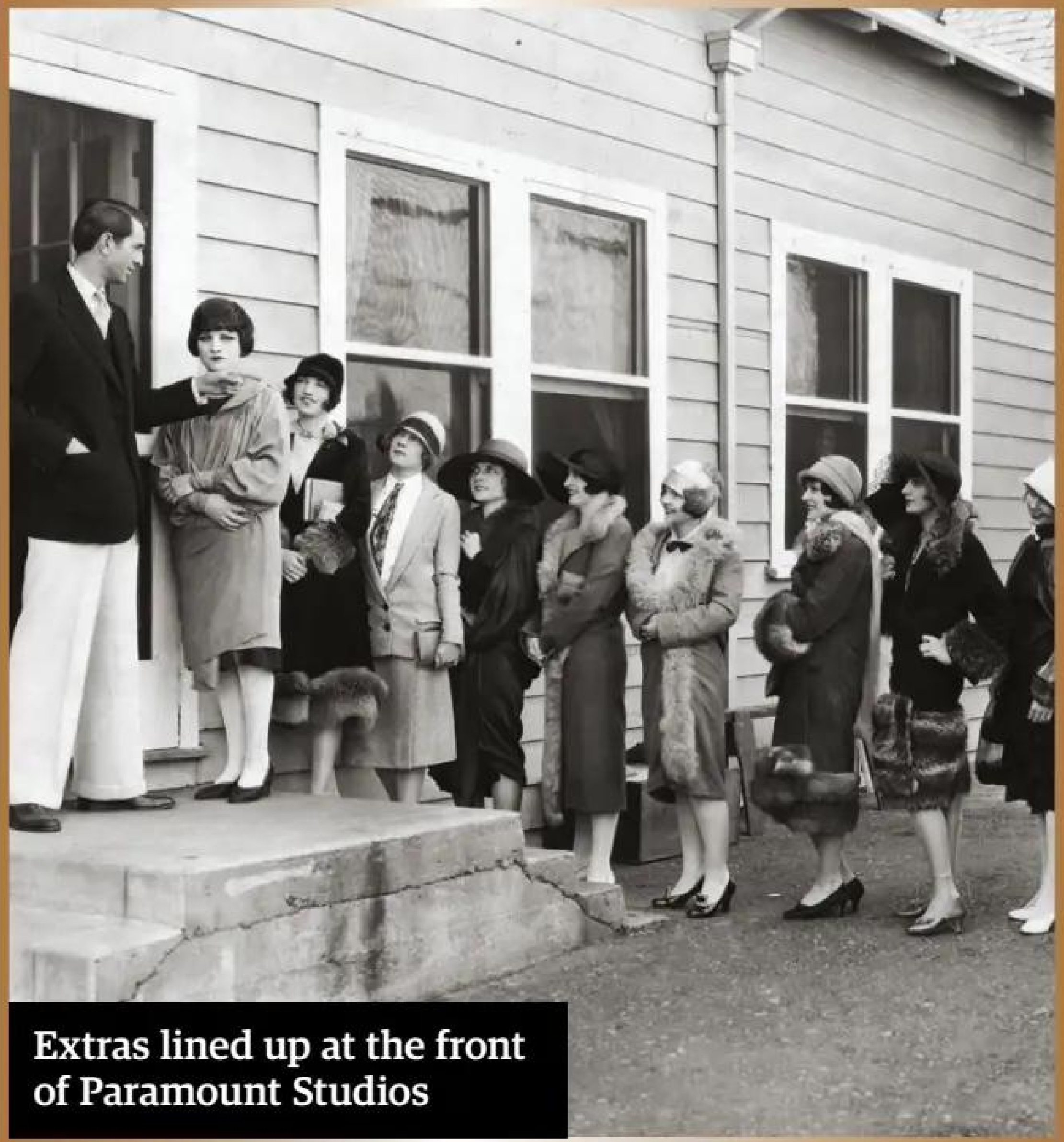
In 1910, filmmaker DW Griffith travelled from New York City across the United States of America until he reached the West Coast. There he made the first Hollywood movie, a 17 minute silent entitled *In Old California*. As the picture wrapped, Griffith could hardly know what he had begun and where it would take him an the world of entertainment. Within a decade, Griffith was the king of American cinema, having directed two legendary films: 1915's *The Birth of a Nation* and, just one year later, *Intolerance*. What had been a nondescript little backwater on the Pacific coast was flourishing; in the scant years since *In Old California*, Hollywood had grown from a humble village into the capital of American – and soon global – film.

Getty Images, Joe Cummings

HOLLYWOODLAND


The front gate to Paramount Studios in the 1920s


The premiere of the Warner Brothers film *My Man* in 1928


Extras lined up at the front of Paramount Studios

In Old California, by Hollywood legend DW Griffiths, was the first film ever shot in Hollywood

Public Domain

THE ICON INDUSTRY

As the 1920s dawned, Hollywood wasn't just a town where movies were made, it was a byword for a whole industry. And what an industry it was. Rich in talent, creativity and cash, as the world looked to a bright future after the shadows of war, a factory churning out dreams was just what the public needed. They had suffered through conflict and tragedy and when audiences paid a few pennies at the box office and settled down in their seats, they wanted to enter into another world.

Hollywood was made up of dozens of small studios, churning out hundreds of films between them. Whilst some of these were forgettable even at the time, others caught the public mood and launched their stars and creators into the stratosphere. Names like Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, better known as "America's Sweetheart" or the "Queen of Hollywood", and Douglas Fairbanks dominated at the box office, whilst DW Griffiths and Cecil B DeMille were as famous as the actors they directed. Stars became the new American royalty, commanding huge salaries and devotion from their fans. They dictated fashions and style, with audiences looking to recreate the sharp bob of Louise Brooks or the smooth smoulder of Rudolph Valentino, and became as much a product as the movies in which they starred. It was a heady time for movies.

The industrial scale of Hollywood in the Jazz Age needed something bigger than those myriad small studios and in 1923, Warner Bros, the first of five major movie studios was incorporated. It was joined by Paramount Pictures, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 20th Century Fox and, lastly, RKO Pictures. Between them, the so-called "Big 5" dictated the cinematic tastes of the Western world for decades. They decided who made it and who didn't and wielded enormous influence.

Creating on-screen stars might seem easy enough, with the correct combination of charisma, talent and project, but for the auteur directors, films weren't just entertainment: they were art. No longer constrained by rudimentary technology, as their box of tricks expanded, the best directors could weave their own worlds on screen. Chaplin wrote, directed, starred in and scored his comedies whilst Cecil B DeMille, still the most commercially successful producer-director in film history, became celebrated for his silent epics. DeMille holds another first in the cinema pantheon too: his 1914 *The Squaw Man* was the first full-length feature film made in Hollywood.

CHRISTIE FILM CO.
NESTOR COMEDIES
UNIVERSAL FILMS

Nestor was Hollywood's first movie studio, but it wasn't destined to become one of the Big Five

SHAPING TASTES

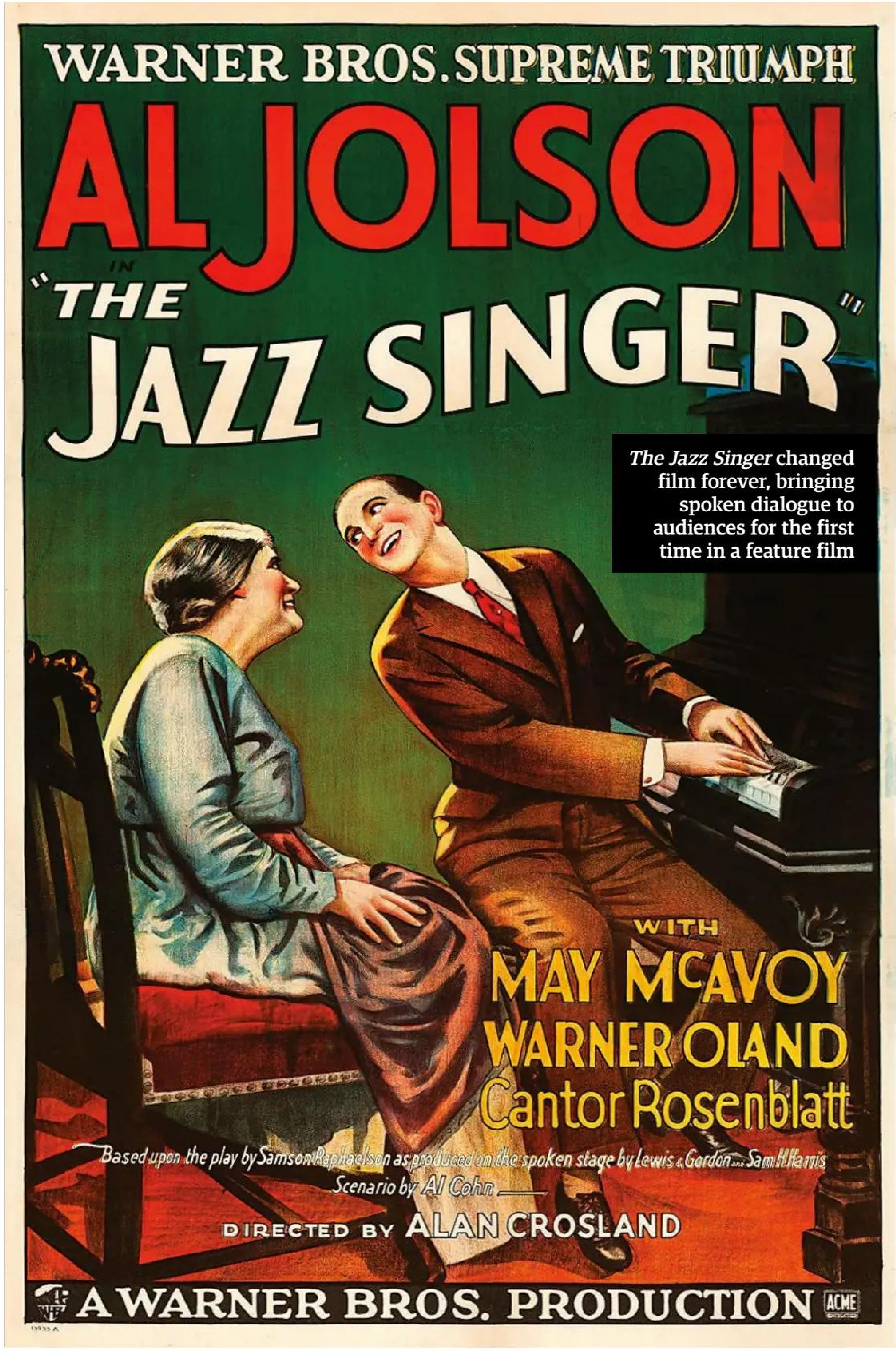
The studios didn't only decide who made it to the top, they decided what they would be watching too. Before the Jazz Age dawned, the focus had been on turning out shorts but now, with stars to be sold and money to be made, ambitious studios turned their ambitions towards feature films. The Big Five absorbed smaller competitors to swell their stable of talent and in a race to be the biggest and best, began placing certain stars in certain products, making the best of typecasting. Fairbanks and Valentino became associated with swashbucklers and romance respectively, whilst Clara Bow and Lillian Gish took care of comedy or tragedy between them; it was hardly surprising that many stars came to rue the deals they had made, restricted as they were in their choices of project. Since stars were on contract to studios for a salary and couldn't say no to a film without risking a suspension, the power rested in the hands of the execs.

In answer to this typecasting, Chaplin, Pickford, Fairbanks and Grffith joined forces to form United Artists, an organisation which would give those who joined it complete control over the production and distribution of their films. Reliant for funding on the dividends paid by cinemas to show their films, rather than the sale of stock like other studios, United Artists was an audacious organisation. Ultimately though, the studio system would prevail and for decades, performers would be paid a generous salary in return for making the movies that their home studios forced on them.

Hollywood started buying up Broadway too, shipping in popular performers and packaging them for the world to see. Once upon a time the Marx Brothers had been adored by the audiences who flocked to pack their sell out shows on the Great White Way, but as the Golden Age of Hollywood dawned at the close of the 1920s, they and their peers came to Hollywood. Now the sell-out shows that could only ever play to a few thousand in the theatre could go global. And global was the watchword. With stars and directors flooding in from overseas, Hollywood began to do what it continues to do to this day: absorb and appropriate influences from across the globe. Recognising that America didn't necessarily hold all the talent, American studios looked to Europe where the likes of FW Murnau and Josef von Sternberg were producing groundbreaking movies. After all, Hollywood had produced nothing like Fritz Lang's iconic *Metropolis*, which blended industrial terror, Art Deco sci-fi and seamless camera trickery to create a dark Expressionist fairytale of a future run amok; it's hardly surprising that studios were looking to poach these visionaries from Europe.

Hollywood icons Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, and DW Griffith formed United Artists, seeking control of their careers

Getty Images, Public Domain


WARNER BROS. SUPREME TRIUMPH
AL JOLSON
IN
"THE JAZZ SINGER"
WITH
MAY McAVOY
WARNER OLAND
Cantor Rosenblatt
Based upon the play by Samson Raphaelson as produced on the spoken stage by Lewis & Gordon ... Sam H. Harris
Scenario by Al Cohn
DIRECTED BY ALAN CROSLAND
A WARNER BROS. PRODUCTION
ACME

The Jazz Singer changed film forever, bringing spoken dialogue to audiences for the first time in a feature film

TECHNICOLOR MOTION PICTURE CORPORATION
presents
THE TOLL OF THE SEA
In Perfect Natural Colors
Story by FRANCES MARION
Directed by CHESTER M. FRANKLIN
Photographic Direction by J. A. BALL
METRO
METRO PICTURES
PICTURES CORPORATION
DISTRIBUTORS

1922’s *The Toll of the Sea*’lobbycard, featuring Anna May Wong

THE TALKIES

Technology was moving fast. Audiences in the Jazz Age thrilled to ever more amazing spectacle and, in a world of black and white entertainment, flocked to see Anna May Wong in 1922’s *The Toll of the Sea*. This film was the second shot in two-strip Technicolor, but the first that could be screened without special equipment. It was a thrilling moment and colour became a selling point for DeMille’s *The Ten Commandments*, in which he tinted scenes to lend them an extra wallop. Even horror got in on the act, as *The Phantom of the Opera* let its sinister Red Death blaze ominously from the screen in 1925, leaving audiences chilled.

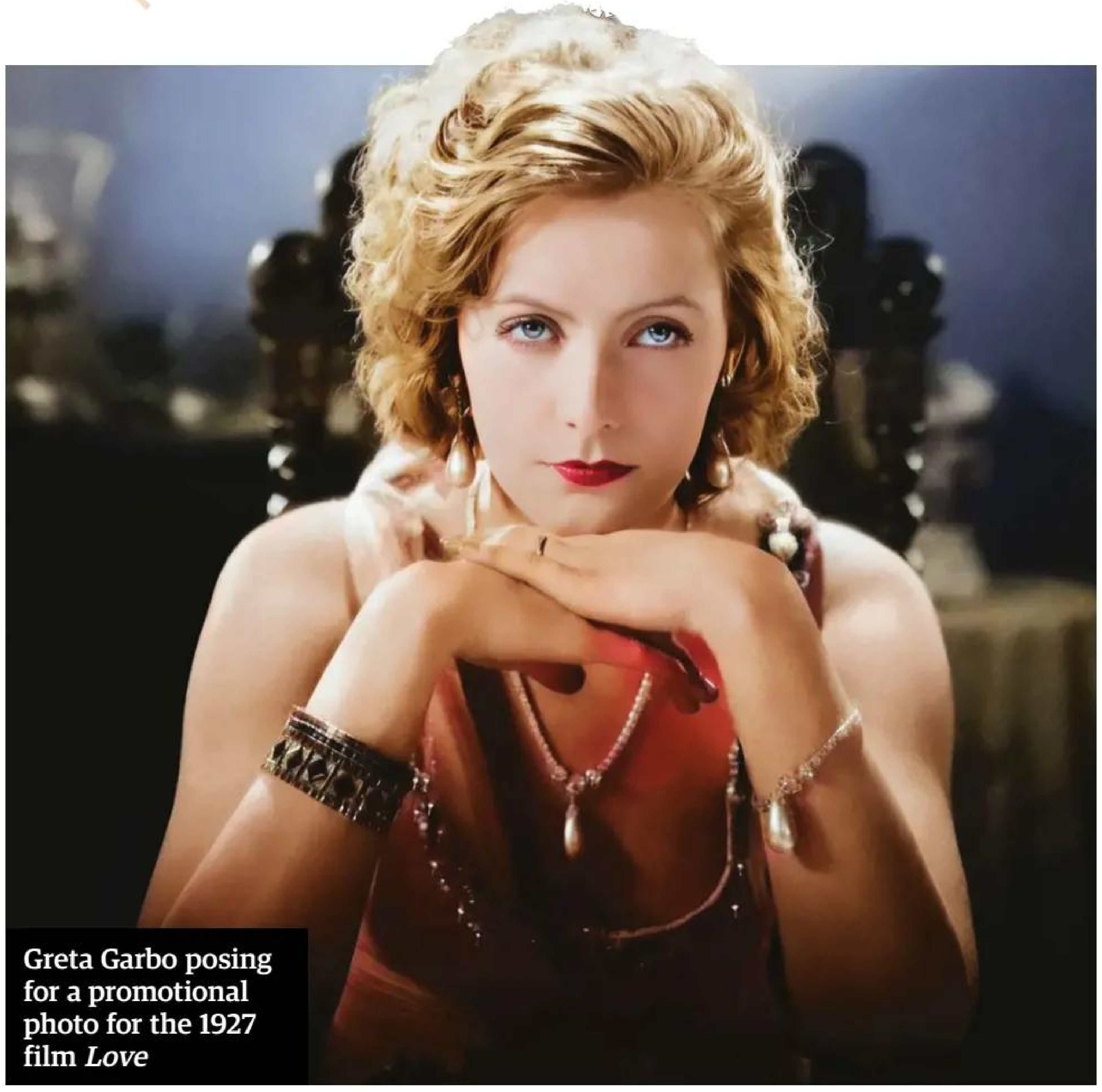
What really changed Hollywood, however, was sound. Until 1927, dialogue in silent movies was displayed on cards that flashed up between scenes, but all of that was about to change. When Al Jolson stepped into the spotlight in *The Jazz Singer* and told audiences, “you ain’t heard nothing yet”, he sealed his place in Hollywood legend.

When the heads of the studios learned that Warner Bros, which was losing money at a rate of knots, was planning to make a movie in which the enormously popular stage performer Al Jolson not only sang but spoke dialogue, they thought the execs must have lost their minds. Warner Bros had already taken a financial battering with 1926’s *Don Juan*, in which rudimentary sound effects played over the silent picture, and Hollywood believed that there was no appetite for talkies, but Sam Warner disagreed. He had been convinced by the popularity of a series of shorts that had been bundled with *Don Juan*, in which popular performers sang a song. But these were short snippets, not a whole movie. Nobody, said the execs at the other four major studios, would want to see a whole talkie.

They were wrong. Sam Warner, who died the day before *The Jazz Singer* premiered, brought in Western Electric’s Vitaphone system and used its sound-on-disc technology to create the first ever feature film with spoken dialogue. There had been sound in shorts, but never in a feature, and audiences flocked to see it. Jolson might have improvised his famous line, but it turned out to be true: nobody had seen or heard anything like it. Many careers fell victim to sound and among them was the seemingly untouchable Mary Pickford. Once the most recognisable woman in America, Pickford chopped off her virginal ringlets for a fashionable bob when she made her first talkie, 1929’s *Coquette*. The picture earned her an Oscar, but Pickford’s fans were put off by the sophisticated new look. By now in her late thirties, Pickford wanted to leave her ingénue roles behind, but her fans wouldn’t let her. After three flops, she retired forever.

Whilst it took the rest of Hollywood a while to catch up and plenty of silent movies were yet to come in the wake of *The Jazz Singer*, it was a watershed moment. The starting pistol had been fired on the talkies.

Two-strip Technicolor allowed filmmakers to add a lustrous dash of colour to their movies



Greta Garbo posing for a promotional photo for the 1927 film *Love*

Broadway stars like the Marx Brothers came to Hollywood to make their names with a global audience

Stars such as the enigmatic Louise Brooks won fans as the very epitome of Jazz Age glamour

Celebrity directors such as Cecil B DeMille (hand on hip) worked magic, leaving audiences wondering how on Earth they created remarkable spectacle

FASHIONING THE FUTURE

Hollywood was not the only place in the world where films were made, but when it comes to cultural importance, its position is undeniable. The icons that emerged in the 1920s, as Hollywood entered its Golden Age, remain legends to this day. Names such as Buster Keaton and Greta Garbo endure and the films that were made in the Jazz Age, though quaint in their way, occupy a unique place in the history of entertainment. They continue to fascinate and inspire, influencing creative artists to this very day. Though many have never seen a silent movie, the style and icons of the Golden Age of Hollywood have endured and today, films such as *Babylon* and *The Great Gatsby* revisit the era of flappers and jazz. It was a time when absolutely anything seemed possible and when the world, once and for all, changed forever. And the future? As Al Jolson said, "You ain't seen nothing yet"!

Getty Images; Public Domain

Buster Keaton in *Steamboat Bill, Jr*

"THOU SHALT NOT"
1 LAW DEFEATED
2 INSIDE OF THIGH
3 LACE LINGERIE
4 DEAD MAN
5 NARCOTICS
6 DRINKING
7 EXPOSED BOSOM
8 GAMBLING
9 POINTING GUN
10 TOMMY GUN

From lacy lingerie to narcotics and a flash of bosom, the Hays Code told Hollywood what it could and couldn't show

Public Domain
Getty Images

THE HAYS CODE

COLE PORTER MIGHT'VE SAID THAT ANYTHING GOES, BUT IN HOLLYWOOD, THAT WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE

In the 1920s, Hollywood was seemingly drowning in scandal. Tales of debauchery both on and off-screen brought a wave of condemnation from religious, political and citizens' groups who demanded that somebody get the motion picture industry under control. In a cry that has been repeated periodically throughout history, moralists wailed that Hollywood was destroying the innocence of the nation and asked what was to be done. The answer, it seemed, was for each individual state to bring in its own code of practice, which movie makers would have to abide by. The states complied and by 1922, these various rules already numbered into their hundreds, with more yet to come as ever more decency laws were passed by the day. In Hollywood, moviemakers knew that to satisfy them all would be impossible.

The answer was for the studios to offer to regulate themselves. The industry formed the Motion Picture Producers and Distributers of America and employed former Postmaster General Will H Hays as its president. The Presbyterian elder and dyed-in-the-wool Republican was paid $100,000 per year for his 25-year stint in the job and it was he who was charged with creating and enforcing a code of conduct not only for what went into movies, but for how actors behaved offscreen too.

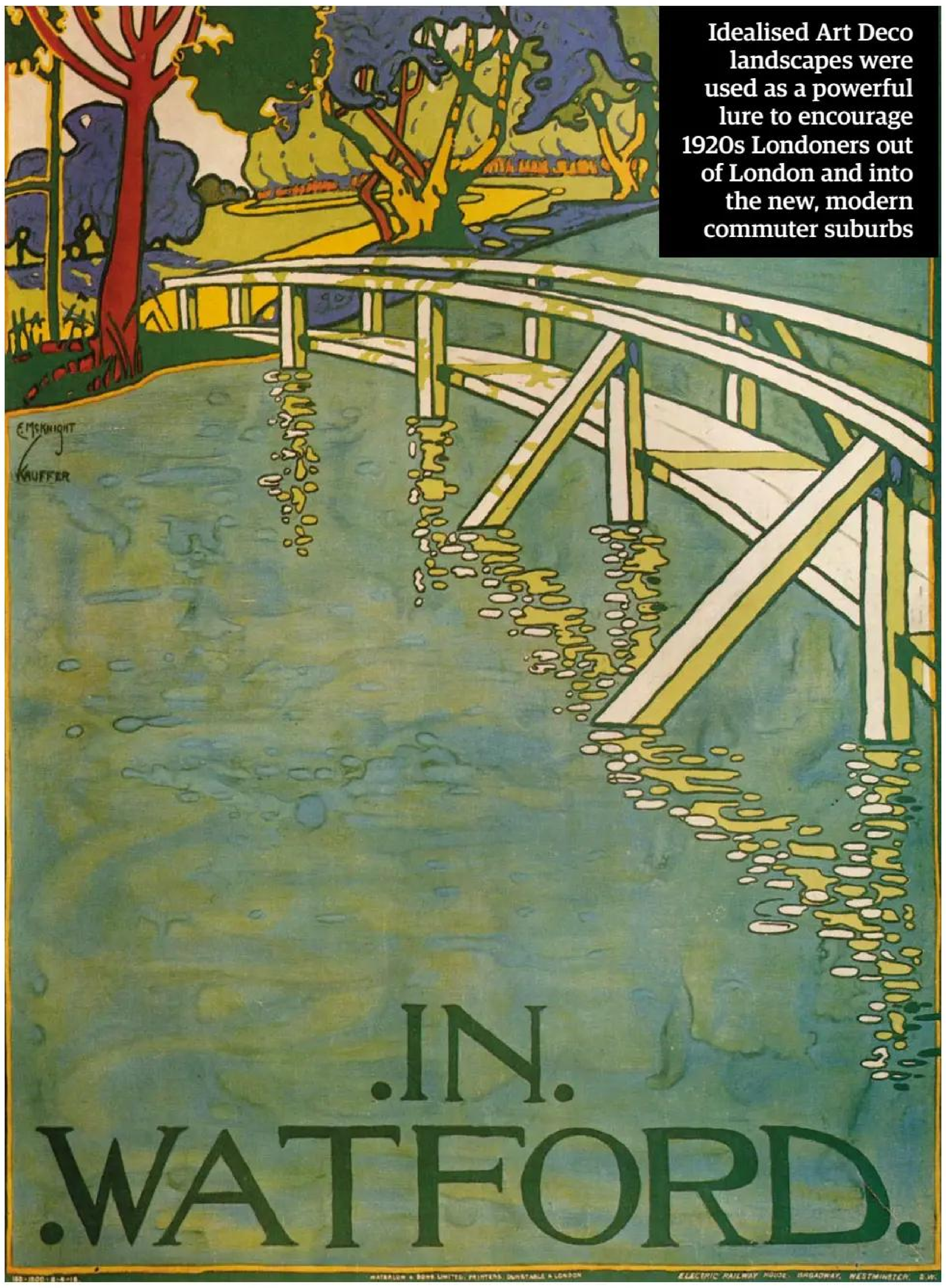
In 1924, Hays unveiled "the Formula", a set of guidelines aimed at ensuring filmmakers and studios self-regulated, so state censor boards didn't feel like they had to step in. He later developed this into the "Don'ts and be Carefuls", but both these guidelines, and a request that his office okay every script produced in Hollywood, were frequently ignored. But there was no ignoring the Production Code, aka the Hays Code, which came into force in 1930. This time the studio executives were in full agreement and applied the rules rigorously. Everything before Hays became pre-Code, and a place where one might glimpse all the prohibited happenings that he had henceforth banned; never again would filmmakers enjoy freedom from censorship.

THE DECADE OF DECO

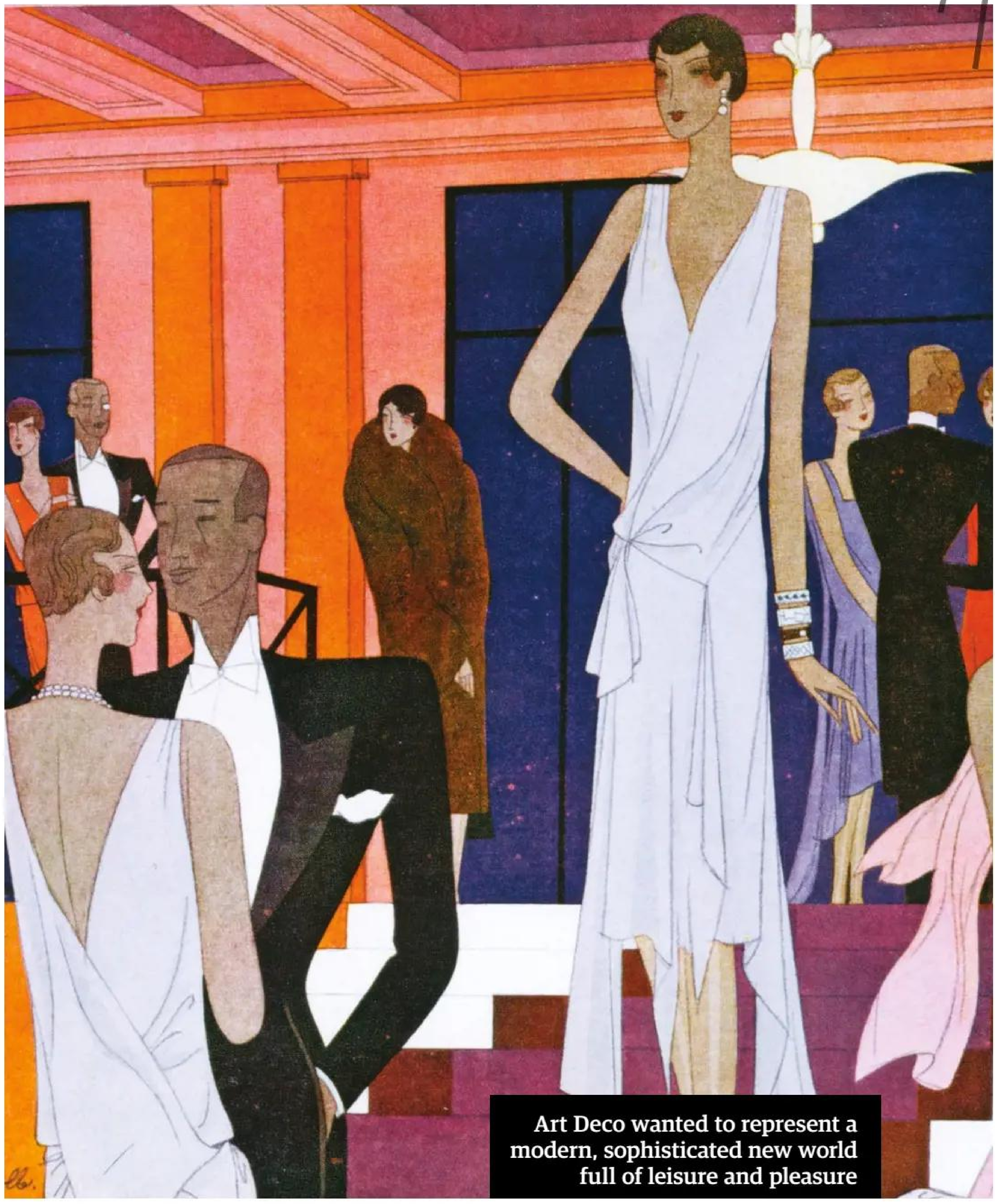
THE GLITZ, GLAMOUR AND MODERNITY OF THE 1920S CALLED FOR A NEW AESTHETIC STYLE THAT GLIDED EFFORTLESSLY AWAY FROM THE HORRORS OF THE 1910S AND MADE THE WORLD BEAUTIFUL ONCE MORE

WORDS: APRIL MADDEN

In the 1920s, a visual style emerged into the mainstream that would go on to not only define the decade but also set the tone for the visual language of modernity throughout the 20th century and beyond. That style was Art Deco.



Idealised Art Deco landscapes were used as a powerful lure to encourage 1920s Londoners out of London and into the new, modern commuter suburbs



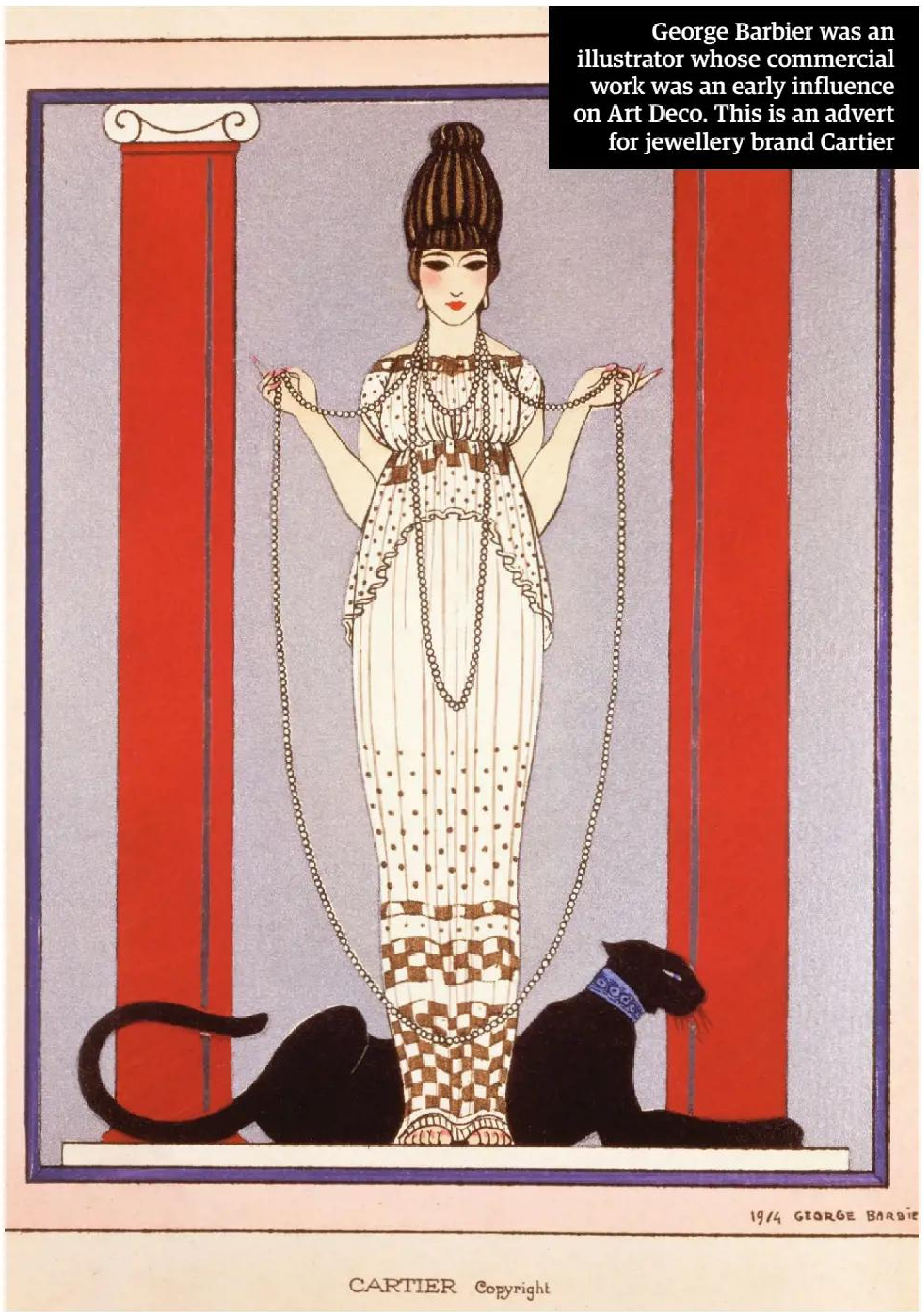
Art Deco wanted to represent a modern, sophisticated new world full of leisure and pleasure

Up until the early 1900s, fine art – painting and sculpture – was largely considered distinct from, and superior to, applied art – architecture, interior design, commercial illustration, ceramics, furnishings and so on. These pretty, inconsequential things that beautified the physical world were created by artisans, while art itself – lofty, elevated, noble – was the province only of artists, who considered expression first and foremost, and tawdry little things like beauty, or getting paid, second if at all. The movements that immediately preceded Art Deco – Arts and Crafts, and Art Nouveau – turned this idea on its head. The great artists of these movements, emerging in a riot of colour and swirling gothic forms out of the glorious bazaar of Victorian aesthetics, were just as happy to create wallpaper or glassware or adverts for soap and liquor as they were to paint for academy shows and gallery openings.

Many of them, like William Morris, were early socialists, believing in the democratisation of art and access to beauty for all social classes. But something happened that shattered their stained-glass dreams, a dark sleek modern presence that tore through the religious and retail cathedrals of Europe indiscriminately, leaving only a handful of bright shattered shards in its wake. That something was World War I. In its sickened and shell-shocked aftermath, it was time for the art world to put down the toy knights that frolicked medievally in its Victorian fantasies of the neo-gothic. The world had been remade anew in the image of this hi-tech horror, and art was left to pick up the pieces and transmute them into something else. Something modern and clean. Something to aspire to, in this appalling new age of the machine.

In 1912, one of the pioneers of Art Deco, André Vera, wrote, rejecting the lavish ostentation of Art Nouveau, that what a new style of art needed was "simplicité volontaire, symétrie manifeste, l'ordre et l'harmonie" (deliberate simplicity, manifest symmetry, order and harmony). This is what Art Deco, as a response to the horrors of the world it was born into, would become. In a world riven by disorder, Art Deco would project visions of serene, measured, elegant calm. It would take the streamlined forms and the manufactured substances of the battlefield's new technologies and conjure them into deft new shapes that spoke of comfort and convenience. It would take the shingled hair of the female survivors of the 1918 flu pandemic and reimagine the cutting away of their fever-matted, waist-length locks as a statement of fashionable, empowered, boyish youth. The tanned skins of the men who had unwillingly summered in the churned fields of Flanders and France (and then been invalided to a sunny sanatorium to recuperate) would become symbolic of active, outdoorsy leisure and health. The vogue for tanning is often attributed to Coco Chanel's famous 1923 sunburn, but in fact its popularity is down to a wider medical trend in the 1920s that saw sunlight as beneficial for treating disease and ill health, and is the reason for all of those vast windows in Art Deco residential architecture. Because Art Deco wasn't just art, it was all-encompassing. It was fashion and beauty, architecture and interior design, painting and sculpture, skyscrapers, ocean liners, advertising posters and soda bottle labels. It was a way of seeing and of being, of living a life characterised by modernity and comfort, cleanliness and health. It looked to the future, and it embraced it.

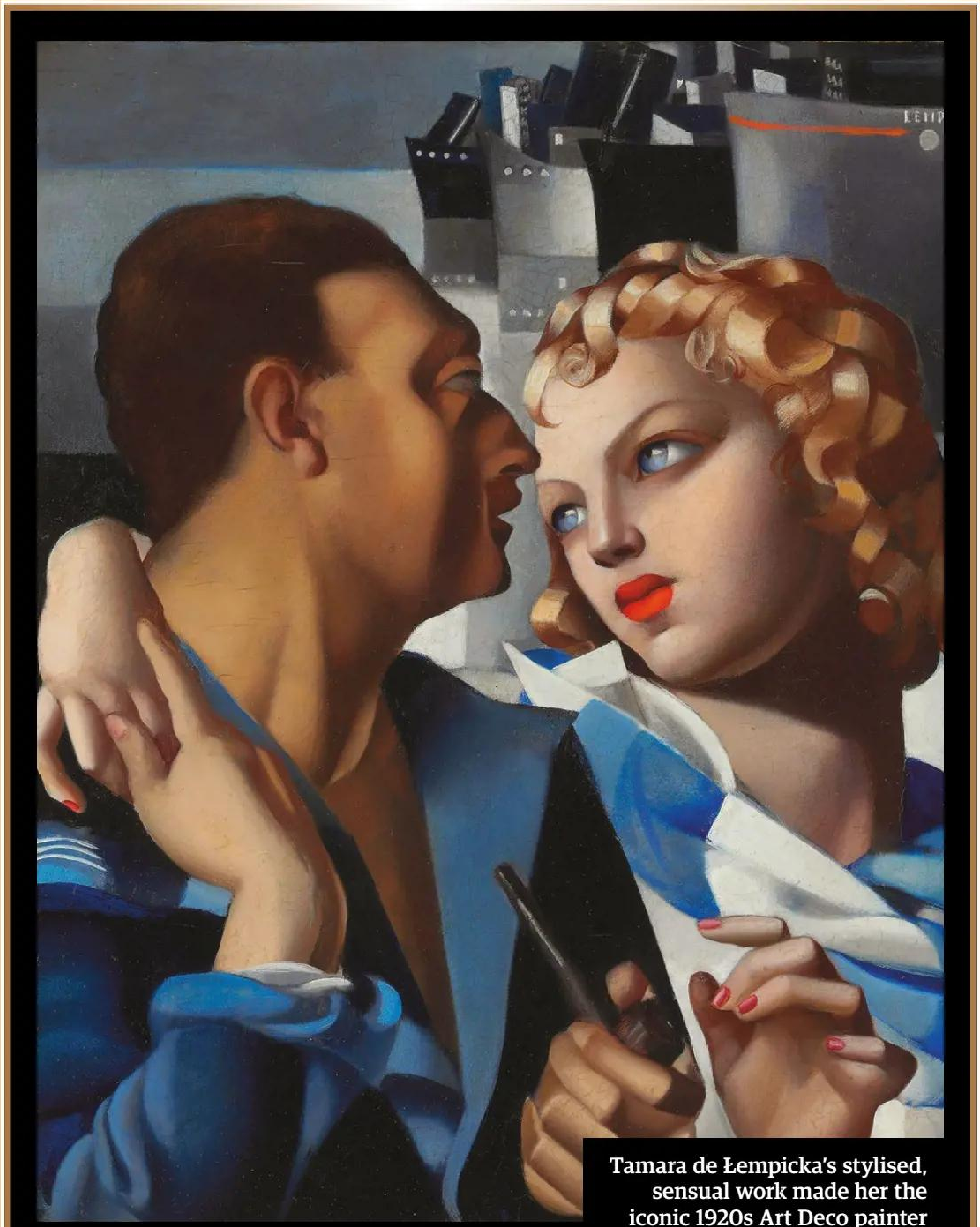
That's not to say that Art Deco wasn't influenced by the past. It adored the bright strong colours and sacred geometry of ancient Egyptian art and architecture. It loved the material richness of Rococo



George Barbier was an illustrator whose commercial work was an early influence on Art Deco. This is an advert for jewellery brand Cartier

and Baroque furniture and utilised the same precious metals and stones, rare woods and opulent fabrics as these over-the-top aesthetic movements – but Art Deco designers worked with simpler, more streamlined forms, and actively embraced mixing luxury resources with new materials like Bakelite, reinforced concrete and rayon, and using chrome in place of silver gilt.

Art Deco takes its name from exactly this combination of beauty and machine manufacture: it's named after the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts) in Paris, France, in 1925, where the style was first distinctively showcased. Earlier examples of Art Deco lean heavily on the decorative part of the equation. George Barbier was an illustrator who bridged the gap between the vivid prettiness of Beaux Arts, with its neoclassical and Baroque influences, and a sleeker, more graphic style. Together with Erté he defined an orientalist look, often in designs for the Folies Bergère cabaret in Paris, France, that was a prelude to the more streamlined figurative art of later Deco. The fantasy women in Erté and Barbier's 1920s works are *Arabian Nights* odalisques, not the real-life, sexually liberated amazons of Tamara de Lempicka's work later in the decade (it's worth noting that contraception first made its way into the mainstream in the 1920s). Meanwhile, New York City's Bryant Park Hotel, aka the American Radiator Building, is a combination of Art Deco and Gothic Revival, rendered in black brick and lavished with golden pinnacles in a fever dream of an Egyptianate necropolis – or possibly *Metropolis*. The director of the iconic 1920s



Tamara de Łempicka's stylised, sensual work made her the iconic 1920s Art Deco painter

THE DECO DIVA

TAMARA DE ŁEMPICKA BECAME ONE OF ART DECO'S MOST PROMINENT FIGURATIVE ARTISTS

Tamara de Łempicka was born into an upper middle class Polish family in 1898, and first discovered her love of painting when she was ten. After a dramatic escape from their home in St Petersburg in the wake of the Russian Revolution, during which she was forced to trade sexual favours for the release of her husband, lawyer Tadeusz Łempicki, the couple found themselves in Paris, where Tamara, now a mother, continued her art training. Impoverished by their escape and Tadeusz' inability to find work, she began to sell portraits and still life paintings to keep her family afloat. In 1925 she exhibited at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, becoming one of the first and most recognisable proponents of figurative Art Deco painting.

Tamara de Łempicka's personal style itself is an intriguing mix. From French neoclassical art, particularly the influence of Ingres, comes the glowing, sensual, lit-from-within skin of her portraits and nudes. Cubism, under the influence of her teacher André Lhote, contributed a stylisation and solidity to her forms that is softer, more luxuriant – and more commercially viable – than that of the aggressively edgy Picasso. From her early teacher Maurice Denis comes the grounding in decorative craft and artisanal technique that brought Tamara de Łempicka into the Art Deco movement in the first place. The unique blending of these three aspects into a crisp, sensuous, serene whole is all her own however, and it made her one of the most recognisable and archetypal painters of figurative Art Deco then and now.

Alamy

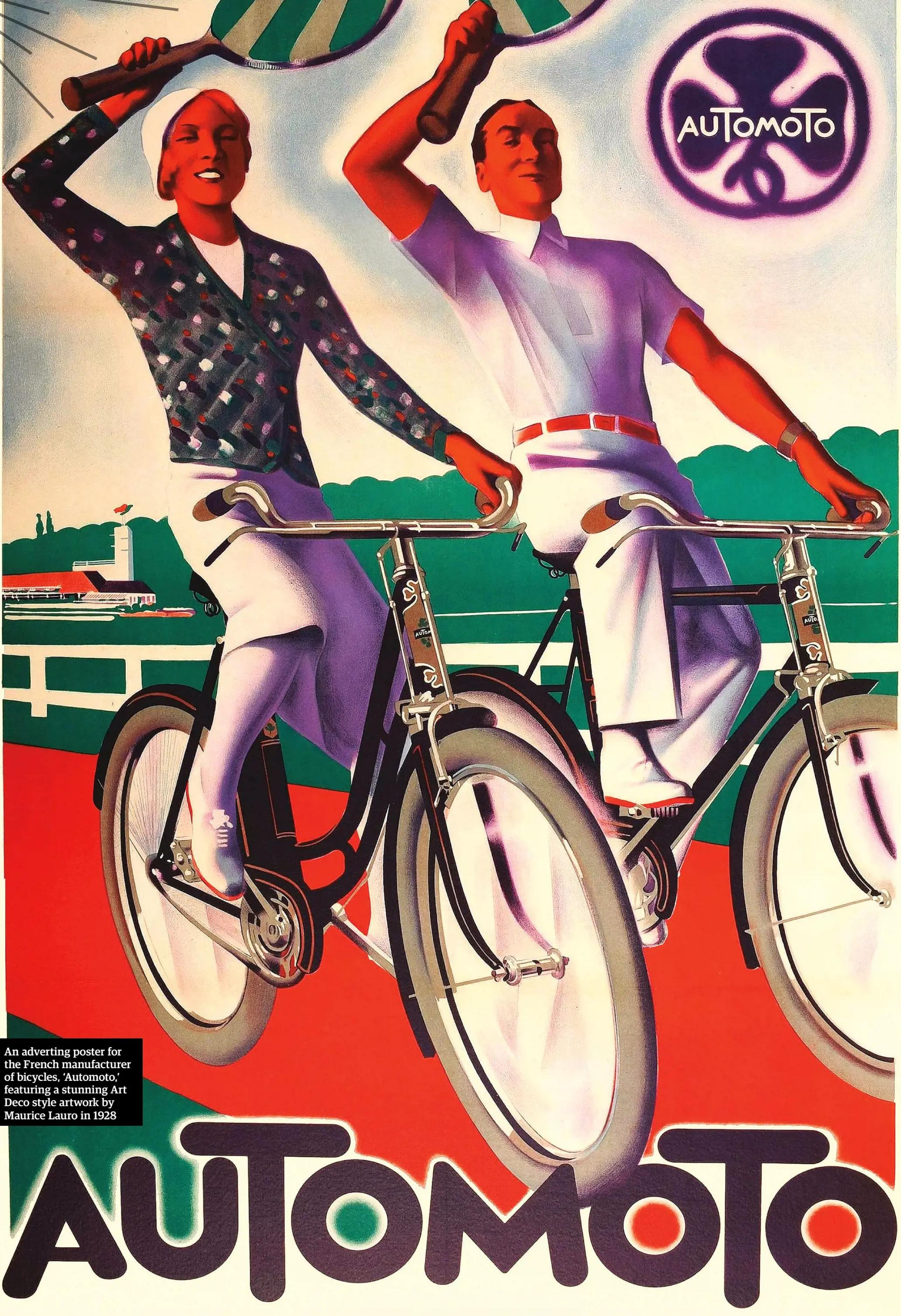
The reception of the Savoy Hotel in London is a well-preserved example of the style

film about the dreams of Deco going terribly wrong conceived the idea for *Metropolis*' cityscape on a visit to Manhattan in 1924, the same year that architects Raymond Hood and J. André Fouilhoux finished their bizarre temple to Deco's dark side.

While Art Deco was ostensibly a style of urban modernity and towering skyscrapers, particularly in the US and in European nations that needed to rebuild their postwar cities, in the UK it was also the louche, sophisticated style of the country set. The wealthy, titled "bright young things", who danced the Charleston in city clubs from Monday to Thursday, regularly retired from the city to their family piles for long weekend parties, and here it became commonplace to see a Jacques Emile Ruhlmann daybed in a sunny corner of a Georgian library, or Eileen Gray chairs drawn up to a chintzy drawing room's Adam fireplace. The 15th century Eltham Palace had a quietly lavish Art Deco extension added to it in the early 1930s that showcases how unexpectedly harmonious the mix of manor and moderne can be. These initially atypical combinations gave rise to a countrified flavour of Art Deco, a style of the aspirational *Metro*-land suburbs and the London Transport posters that advertised them to city-weary workers. Here, stylised Clarice Cliff cottages nestle in shapely Italianate woods, influenced by Futurism and populated by friendly Mabel Lucie Attwell pixies and healthy, rosy-cheeked country children. These posters were aimed at moving the middle classes out of central London, presenting them with classically British but nonetheless modern and comfortable suburban living that was only 40 minutes away from their offices by train. While many of these homes were in the much-mocked Tudorbethan or chalet bungalow styles, Britain still boasts many stunning examples of pure Art Deco suburban housing, with the wrap-around windows and spartan geometry of a palatial city skyscraper miniaturised and transported to the unlikely utopia of Essex's Frinton-on-Sea.

For the country house set, meanwhile, the hotels of London could provide a metropolitan Deco dream that not even the most modern lord of the manor could go all-in on at home. The interiors of both the Savoy and Claridges were lavishly remodelled in the new style, both initially commissioning designer Basil Ionides for their first forays into Art Deco before diverging, with Claridges employing Oswald Milne and the Savoy Sir Howard Robertson. Much of Ionides' earliest work is still visible in both venues though, including the Savoy's iconic Kaspar the Black Cat, a sculpture that joins tables of 13 guests to avert bad luck. In fact, Art Deco is still a constant presence in the world all around us today. In British shopping districts especially, a pedestrian only has to look up to catch a glimpse of Deco mouldings above ordinary high street shops, while in the US, Art Deco towers still soar over the streets of Pittsburgh, Miami, Chicago and of course New York City, home of one of the style's most beloved icons, the Empire State Building.

You can find Deco's influence in the structure of suburban homes, the clean lines of graphic art, the shape of a coffee pot, and in countless posters, fonts, and product labels. Its simplicity and quiet luxury means that while Art Deco may sometimes fall out of vogue, it's always in style.


AUTOMOTO
AUTOMOTO

An adverting poster for the French manufacturer of bicycles, 'Automoto,' featuring a stunning Art Deco style artwork by Maurice Lauro in 1928

Alamy

BEYOND ART DECO

OTHER EARLY 20TH CENTURY ART MOVEMENTS WERE INFLUENTIAL ON, OR INSPIRED BY, ART DECO, AND HAD AN ONGOING INFLUENCE ON THE WIDER WORLD

WORDS: **APRIL MADDEN**

DADAISM

SKEWERING SOCIETY WITH IRONY

Where Art Deco looked at World War I and strove to make something new, meaningful, and beautiful to elevate its aftermath, Dadaism saw the conflict as yet another symptom of the problems inherent in modern Western capitalism. For Dadaists, established social and cultural norms were old, tired, inauthentic, and clinging to a level of power that they didn't deserve. They were worthy only of lampooning in the most skewed and irrational ways.

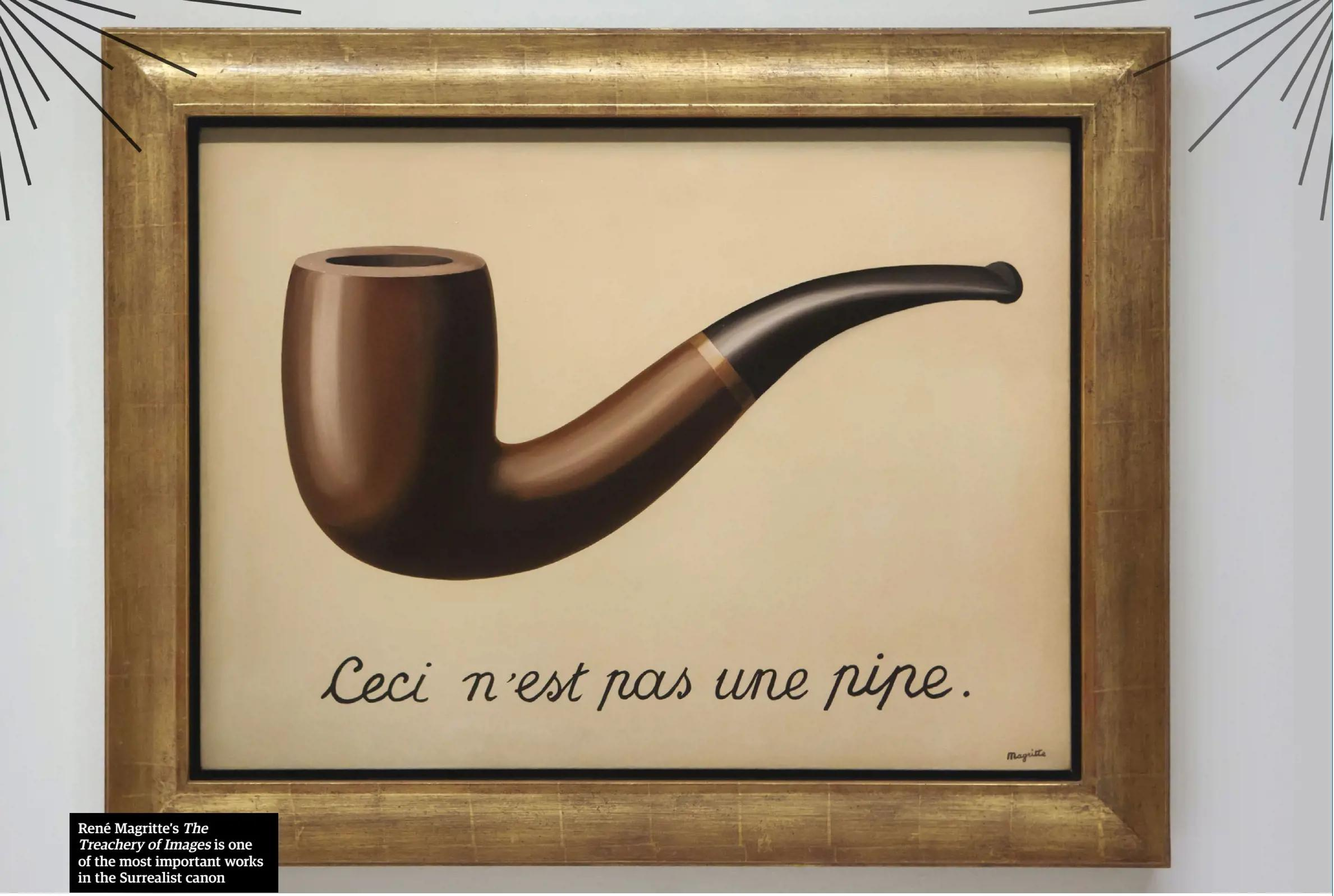
Dadaists even (performatively) disagreed on where the movement's name came from. Was it from a paper knife stuck in a dictionary, revealing the French slang word for 'hobby horse', with all its connotations of the jumped-up bourgeoisie? Was it from the formless babble of a child? Or the fervid discussions of poets and performance artists in a cafe in Zurich?

Wherever Dadaism came from, its lively avant-garde techniques, combining literature, visual art and performance, went on to influence the Surrealists. Meanwhile Cut Up, the act of assembling a new work from cut-and-pasted text or images, went on to influence everyone from 1950s Beat writers to Pop Artists and even chaos magicians.

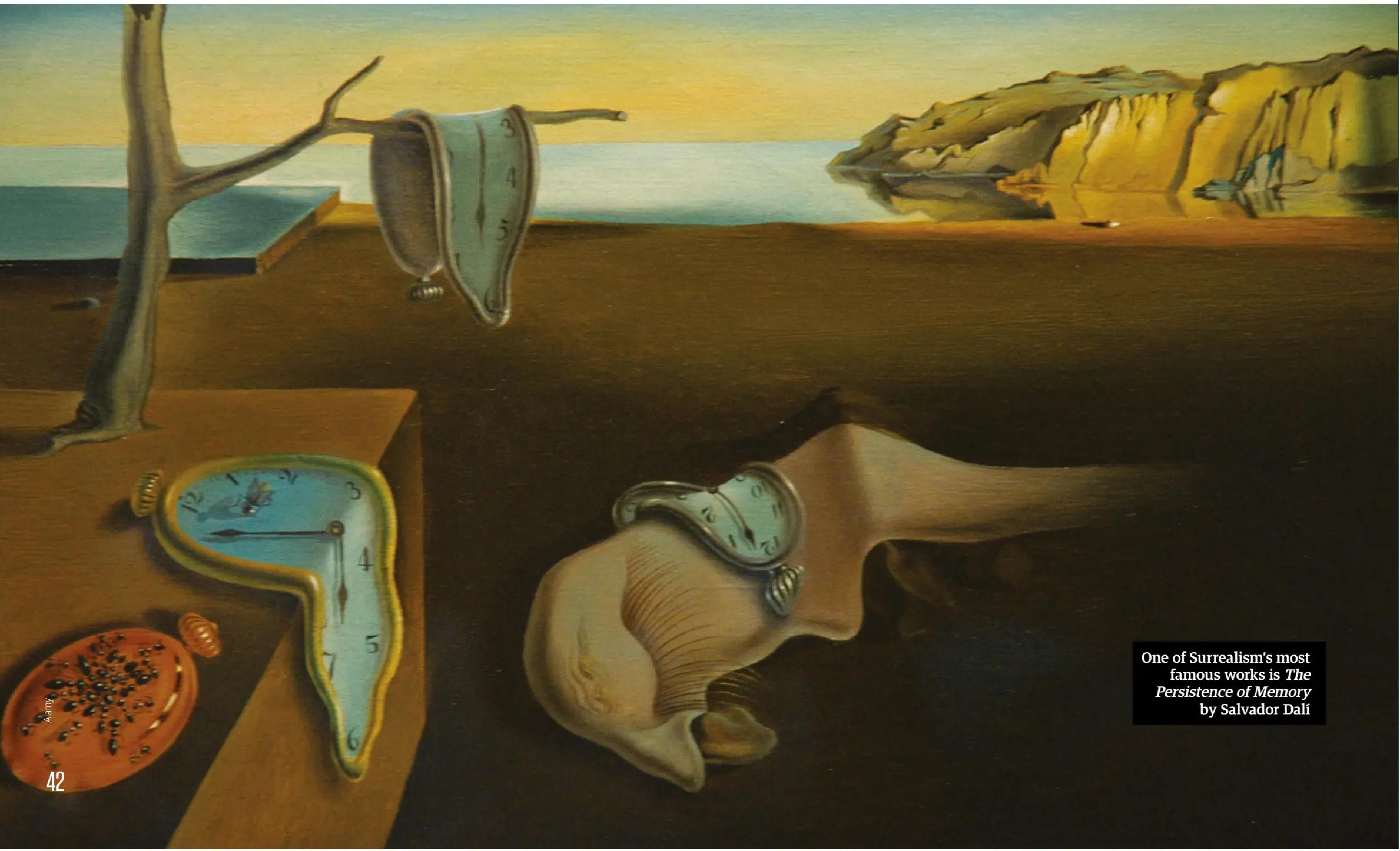
One of Dadaism's most famous works is Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, a repurposed urinal that he signed with a pseudonym and placed in a gallery. These 'ready-mades' were everyday objects that Dadaists declared to be art, which, they said, was enough to make them so; an ironic idea that went on to influence postmodernism, and is still with us to this day.

Dadaism's most famous work is *Fountain* by Marcel Duchamp

Alamy


Ceci n'est pas une pipe.
Magritte

René Magritte's *The Treachery of Images* is one of the most important works in the Surrealist canon



One of Surrealism's most famous works is *The Persistence of Memory* by Salvador Dalí

Alamy

SURREALISM

OPENING THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION

For Surrealists, the terms found in psychology and psychiatry – then still in their early days – provided a rich vein of inspiration. Surrealists were interested in dreams and the subconscious mind, the evocative images these could generate and whether they tapped into deeper or possibly shamanic meanings that could be understood on a subconscious or even subliminal level by minds other than the one that created them. Their works explored symbolism and archetypes, the difference between reality and representation, and pareidolia, the human ability to make meaningful shapes – particularly faces – out of abstract forms.

Some of the most famous artists among the Surrealists were Salvador Dalí, René Magritte and Max Ernst. Unlike Art Deco, Surrealism has no one recognisable visual language. Dalí is famous for his melting forms, while Magritte's work is hyper realistic but strange. His most famous work, *The Treachery of Images*, is a bold manifesto of what was most important to the Surrealists. In it, a realistically painted pipe is accompanied by the legend "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" (This is not a pipe). It's an invitation to the viewer to think about the difference between images and reality, about what representation means and if it can ever be truly accurate, or if it's always modulated through the subconscious of both the creator and the viewer.

EXPRESSIONISM

GETTING IT ALL OUT

Like Surrealism, Expressionism was interested in how the mind received and processed art. Where Surrealism asked if universality really existed, Expressionism was interested in subjectivity, personal response, and artistic expression. Like Dadaism, it was angry with the modernisation of the world and how this seemed to make individuals into mere cogs in a capitalist machine; functional and interchangeable. Sometimes it showcases pastoral forms, as if harking back to and idealising a more primal, earthy existence – Wassily Kandinsky's *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider), with its vivaciously painted horseman riding urgently through a landscape somewhere between Impressionism and abstraction, is an important milestone in the evolution of Expressionism, and gave its name to a group of likeminded artists exploring the movement. At other times it lurches into unsettling maelstroms of personal and social breakdown: Edvard Munch's *The Scream* is one of Expressionism's most famous images. Expressionism is interested in elevated, heightened emotion and reaction: where Surrealism asks a question, Expressionism loudly demands a response. It often crosses over and even merges with other early 20th century avant garde movements like Surrealism, Dadaism and Vorticism, making it difficult sometimes to pick out from the other styles. Like Dadaism, it also encompassed literary and performative elements as well as visual.

Edvard Munch's *The Scream* is arguably the most famous Expressionist painting in the world

Getty Images
Alamy

The SS Normandie was an icon of Streamline Moderne and is the reason for its alternative name of Ocean Liner Style

Alamy

STREAMLINE MODERNE

TO ART DECO AND BEYOND

As Art Deco shimmied into the economic downturn of the 1930s it took fewer of its influences from decorative art and more of them from industry. The high times of the 1920s were over and the only answer to the financial rigours of the '30s was to adopt austerity in everything. For Art Deco, this meant paring its distinctive shapes down into the not-decorative-at-all forms of Streamline Moderne. This evolution of Deco takes its influence from the streamlined shapes of then-modern trains, aeroplanes and ocean liners – in fact, it's called Style Paquebot in French, or 'ocean liner style' – and is predominantly found in architecture and industrial design. This is a utilitarian Deco for the stronger, sleeker, faster world of the 1930s. It's found in municipal buildings like London Underground stations and New York's LaGuardia airport, factories and office buildings, and in ocean liners themselves. Still the predominant mode of international transport in the 1930s, these palaces of the seas were one of the few places where the lavishness of Art Deco could still be found into the 1930s. The opulent interior of the SS Normandie is often compared to the Hall of Mirrors in the palace of Versailles; it was festooned with Lalique glass. Sadly, the Normandie was accidentally scuttled in World War II while being converted into a troopship for the war effort.

Getty Images

Actress Greta Garbo curled up in a chair reading a novel

THE GOLDEN AGE OF LITERATURE

EXPLORE THE SWEEPING LANDSCAPE OF PROVOCATIVE AND GROUNDBREAKING 1920S WRITING

WORDS: EMILY STANIFORTH

The 1920s were a time of great literature. From the pursuits of modernists trying to summarise the general feeling of disillusionment felt by the younger generation after the First World War, to the authors who wrote children's tales that would become beloved classics, the decade saw a new era of creativity, passion and intellectualism. New ways of thinking and writing were employed, and new genres and themes started to emerge. So let's take a look at some of the most influential and important aspects of the 1920s literary scene.

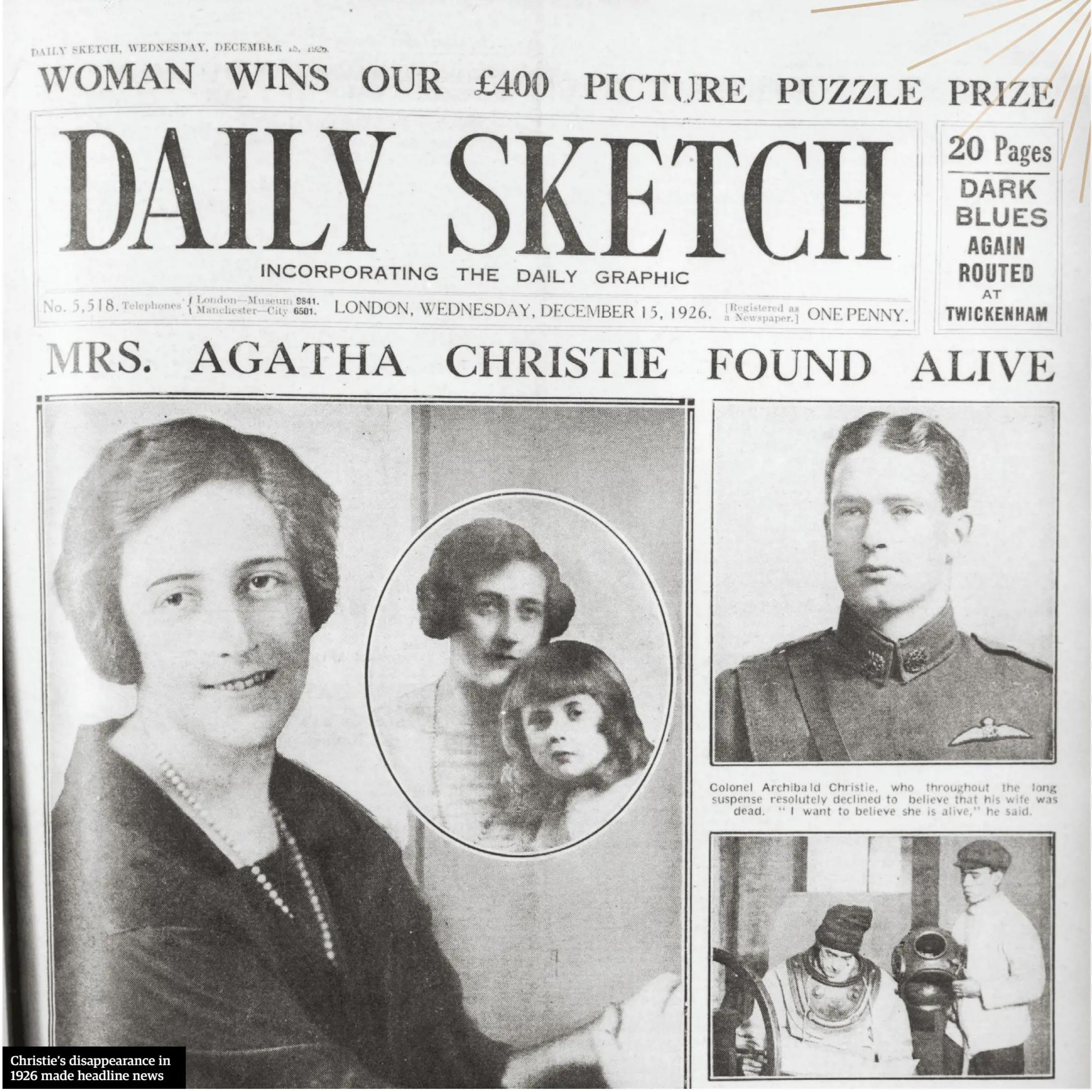
F SCOTT FITZGERALD

Is there any author as synonymous with the Roaring Twenties as F Scott Fitzgerald? From between 1920 and 1925, Fitzgerald's work became hugely popular due to his ability to perfectly characterise the atmosphere of the post-war era and write from the point of view of the disenfranchised youth of America. Fitzgerald himself observed that he wrote "with the authority of failure", having suffered a number of setbacks in his early life, including growing up poor among the bourgeoisie of St Paul, Minnesota, dropping out of Princeton University and rejections from women he fell in love with. Even the woman who would later become his wife, Zelda Sayre, turned down his first proposal of marriage because of his career prospects.

However, the down-and-out perspective of Fitzgerald fuelled his writing, and many of the hardships and dilemmas he faced provided themes and plots for his novels. *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald's most famous novel, was published in 1925 and follows Nick Carraway as he is pulled into the lavish and extravagant world of the millionaire Jay Gatsby. Inspired by the parties Fitzgerald attended when he was courting his first love, socialite Ginevra King, *The Great Gatsby* did not attain the same popularity as some of his other work, but renewed interest in the book during World War II ensured it became the quintessential novel of the Jazz Age – a term popularised by Fitzgerald to sum up the 1920s era of prosperity and hedonism.

F Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald became one of the most infamous celebrity couples in 1920s America

Getty Images



DAILY SKETCH, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1926.

WOMAN WINS OUR £400 PICTURE PUZZLE PRIZE

DAILY SKETCH

INCORPORATING THE DAILY GRAPHIC

No. 5,518. Telephones { London—Museum 9841. Manchester—City 6501. LONDON, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1926. [Registered as a Newspaper.] ONE PENNY.

20 Pages

DARK BLUES AGAIN ROUTED AT TWICKENHAM

MRS. AGATHA CHRISTIE FOUND ALIVE

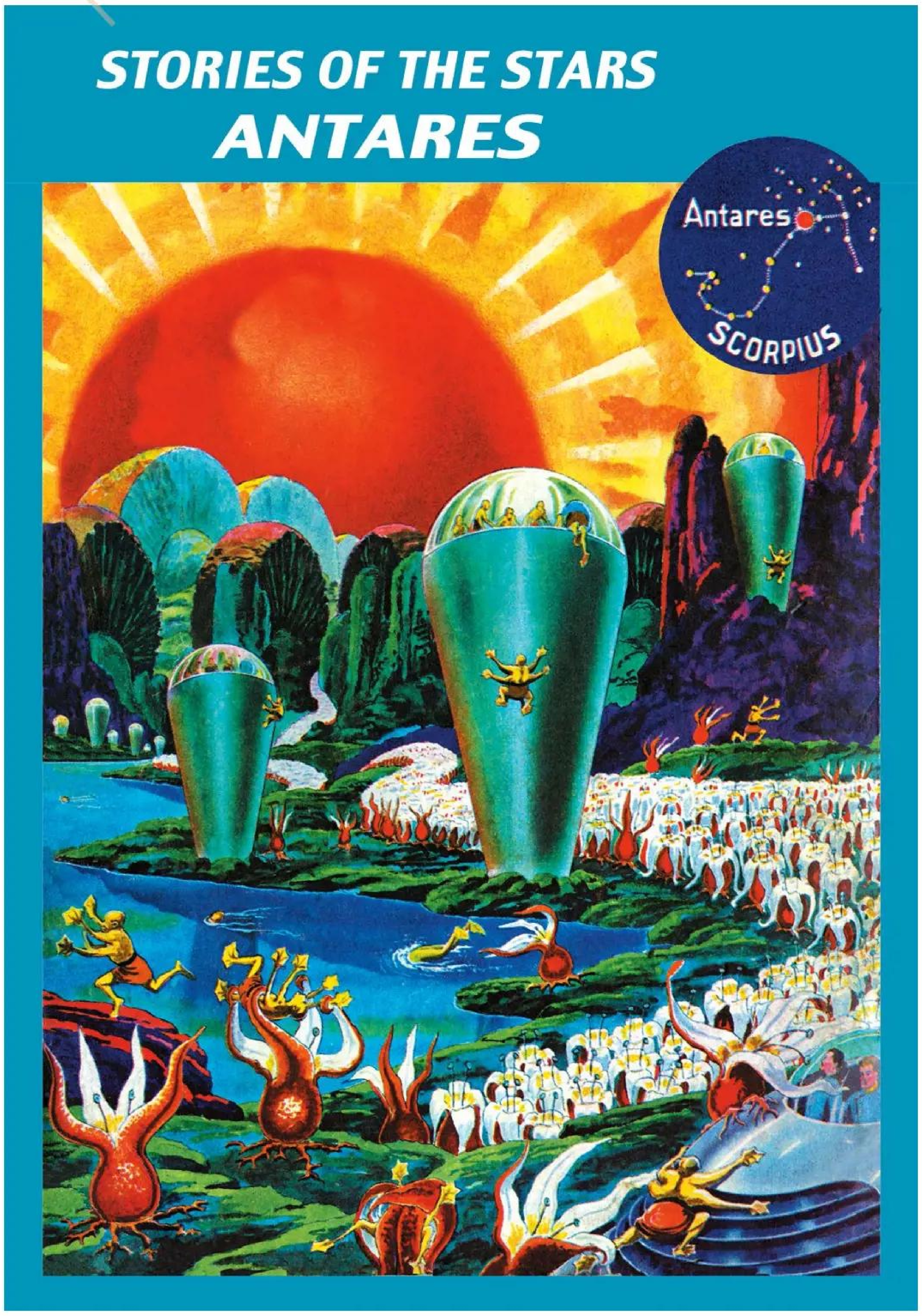
Colonel Archibald Christie, who throughout the long suspense resolutely declined to believe that his wife was dead. "I want to believe she is alive," he said.

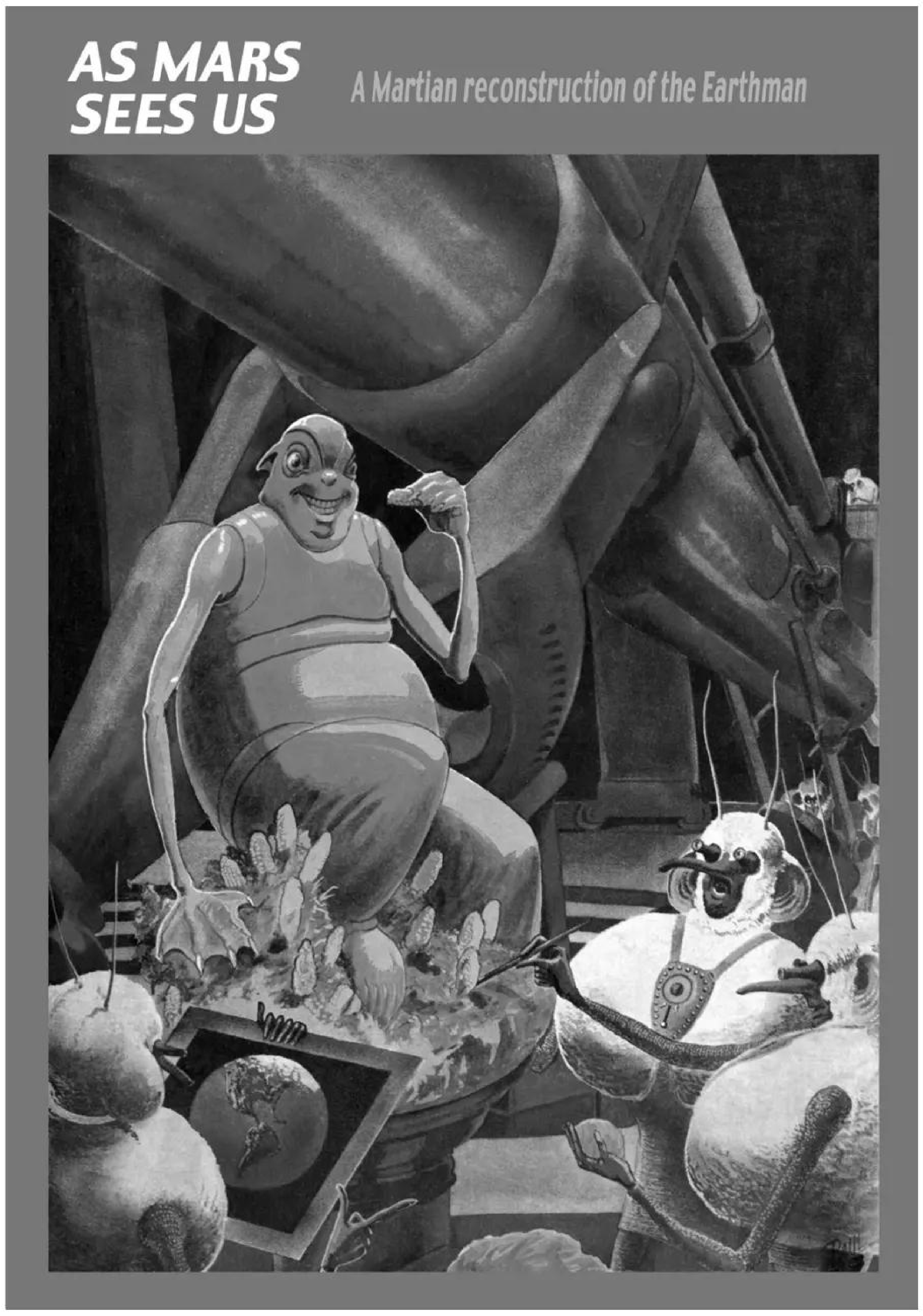
Christie's disappearance in 1926 made headline news

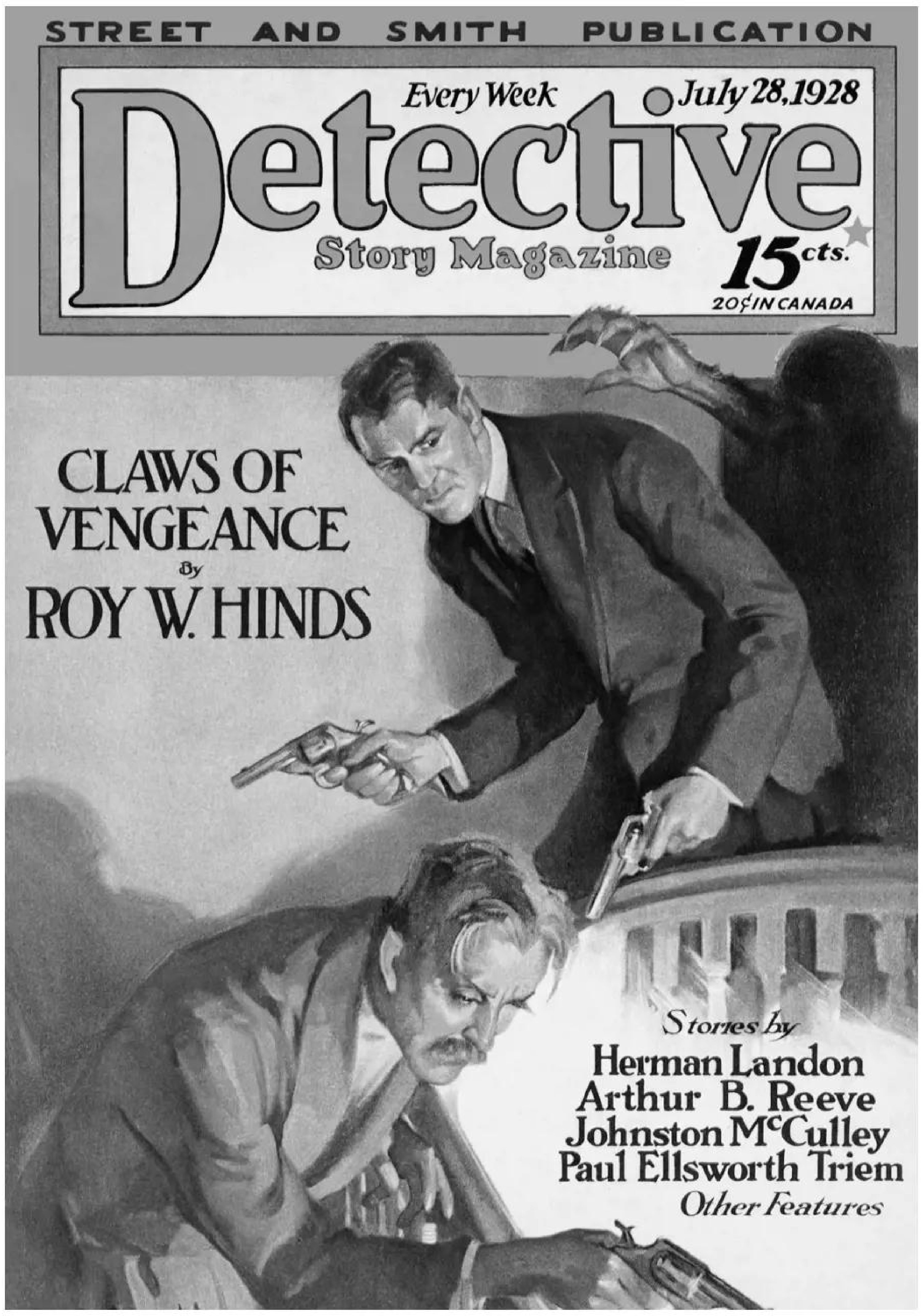
THE AGE OF DETECTIVE FICTION

In 1920, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* was first published. Written by the incomparable Agatha Christie, a British author who would go on to become the godmother of detective fiction, the book introduced the world to the infamous moustachioed Belgian detective Hercule Poirot. The publication of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* not only marked Christie's debut, but is also considered the beginning of the Golden Age of Detective Fiction. During this age a flurry of detective novels, all following a similar format with recognisable characters, settings and tropes, became popular. This genre of writing was dominated by women like Dorothy L Sayers and Josephine Tey, with Christie at the head, but also became the style of popular male authors like GK Chesterton.

In a strange twist of fate, Agatha Christie made headline news in 1926 when she seemingly disappeared off the face of the earth in a real life mystery. On the night of 3 December, Christie drove away from her home and vanished. Her car was discovered in the following days by a search party that consisted of a thousand police officers and hundreds of members of the public. Despite the widespread search for Christie, there was no sign of her for a total of 11 days. Media speculation went wild with theories that she had been murdered by her husband, Archibald Christie, who was known to have engaged in extramarital affairs. Other theories postulated that Christie had been suffering from depression and had drowned herself in a body of water that lay nearby where her car had been found. Eventually, on 14 December, the police were alerted to Christie's presence at the Swan Hydro hotel in Harrogate, north Yorkshire, by a staff member. It turned out that the writer had been staying at the hotel under the name of her husband's mistress, and when she spoke to the police she could not recount how she had ended up there or what had happened to her in the days she had been missing. While the mystery of Christie's disappearance has never been solved, the writer returned home and continued to write best-selling detective fiction and mystery novels for another 47 years.


STORIES OF THE STARS
ANTARES
Antares
SCORPIUS


AS MARS SEES US
A Martian reconstruction of the Earthman


STREET AND SMITH PUBLICATION
Every Week
July 28, 1928
Detective
Story Magazine
15 cts.
20¢ IN CANADA
CLAWS OF VENGEANCE
By
ROY W. HINDS
Stories by
Herman Landon
Arthur B. Reeve
Johnston McCulley
Paul Ellsworth Triem
Other Features

PULP MAGAZINES

Published from 1896 onwards, pulp magazines were cheap publications, made from inexpensive paper stock, that featured a selection of fictional stories. Much like the penny dreadful publications of the previous century, the pulp magazine was particularly popular in America among the general public despite having a reputation for being a lesser form of literature. Between the 1920s and 1930s, pulp fiction was at its peak, especially during the Great Depression (1929-1939) when people had less disposable income to spend on entertainment.

Some of the most noteworthy pulp magazines from the 1920s included *Amazing Stories*, launched in 1926 and specialising in science fiction, *Love Story Magazine*, a romance publication first published in 1921, and *Western Story Magazine*, which began in 1919. However, there were a far greater number of pulp magazines than the few mentioned here, and the sheer amount of pulp fiction published contributed to the popularity of the format: the huge choice meant there was something for everyone. The pulp magazines were also influential during the 1920s because they provided budding authors with the opportunity to be published. Tennessee Williams had his first short story published in *Weird Tales* in 1928 while detective fiction writer Dashiell Hammett had many of his early works published in the *Black Mask* magazine. The work of other famous writers were also sometimes compiled in pulp magazines. *Amazing Stories*, for example, featured short stories by authors like HG Wells, Edgar Allen Poe, and Jules Verne.

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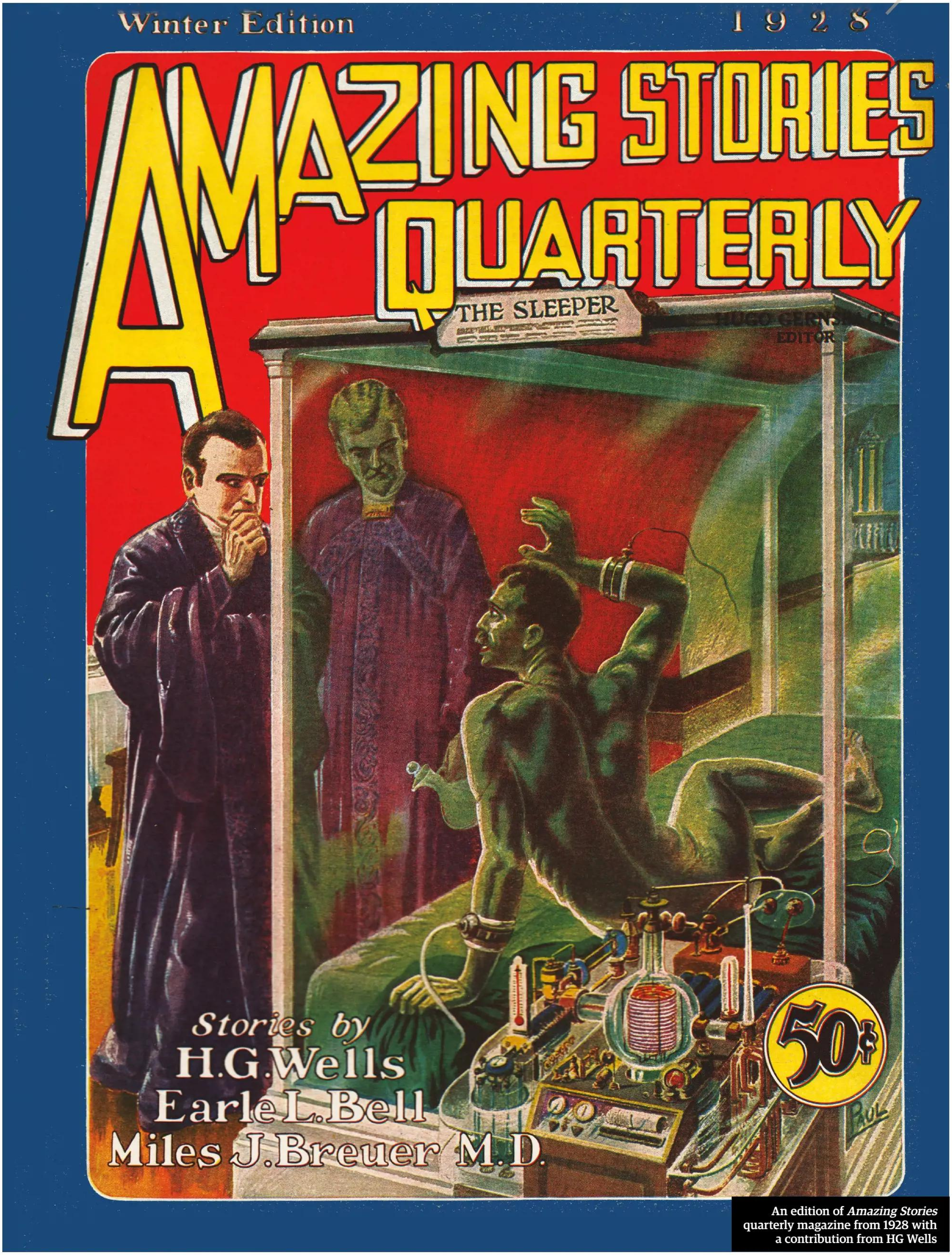

Winter Edition
1928
AMAZING STORIES
QUARTERLY
THE SLEEPER
HUGO GERNSBACK
EDITOR
Stories by
H.G.Wells
Earle L.Bell
Miles J.Breuer M.D.
50¢
PAUL

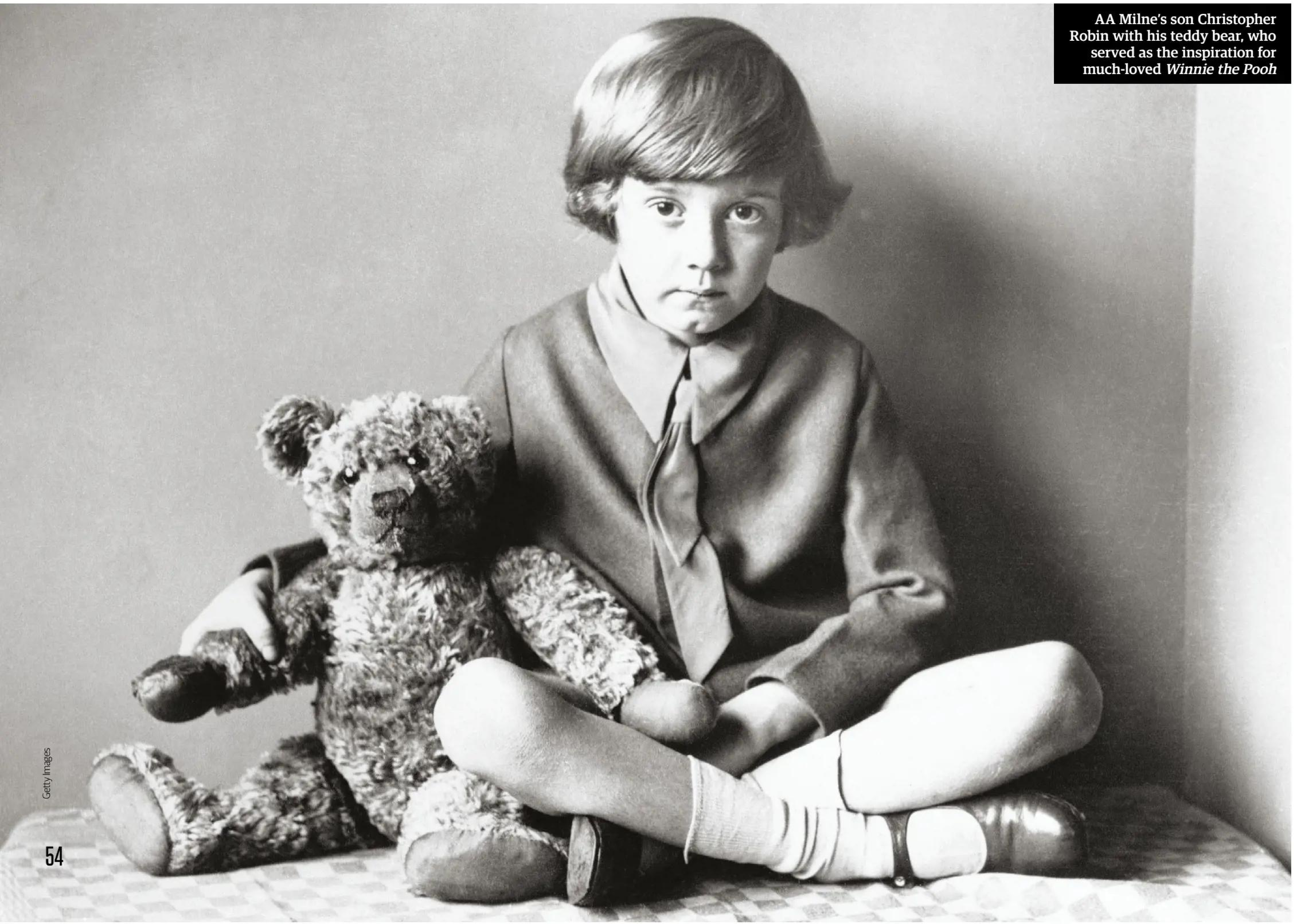
An edition of *Amazing Stories* quarterly magazine from 1928 with a contribution from HG Wells

CHILDREN'S FICTION

During the decade of the 1920s, a number of books written for children were published that would become some of the most beloved and lasting stories for children across the world. One such publication was AA Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*, first published in 1926, about a fictional talking teddy bear and his adventures with friends in the made up Hundred Acre Wood. Milne, a poet and playwright who had served in the First World War, became inspired to write the story of *Winnie the Pooh* after observing his son's love for his teddy bear and his fascination with a bear named Winnipeg at London Zoo. When creating his fictional world, Milne populated Hundred Acre Wood with his son's other stuffed animal toys – Tigger, Piglet, Eeyore, Kanga and Roo – and named the only human character in the tale after his son, Christopher Robin. Other notable British children's publications from this era include *Milly-Molly-Mandy* by Joyce Lankaster-Brisley and *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting.

Though *Winnie the Pooh* is one of the most perennially popular British children's stories, the UK in the 1920s saw an overall decline in fiction written for children when compared to the previous century. In the US however, there was an increase in children's libraries and reading rooms and thus, an increased demand for children's books. Margery Williams' *The Velveteen Rabbit* (1922), a tale about a toy rabbit who wishes to become real through the love of his owner, remains one of the most loved children's books in the United States and across the world. The author of *Anne of Green Gables*, LM Montgomery, also published her *Emily of New Moon* series of novels from 1923 onwards.

Author AA Milne



AA Milne's son Christopher Robin with his teddy bear, who served as the inspiration for much-loved *Winnie the Pooh*

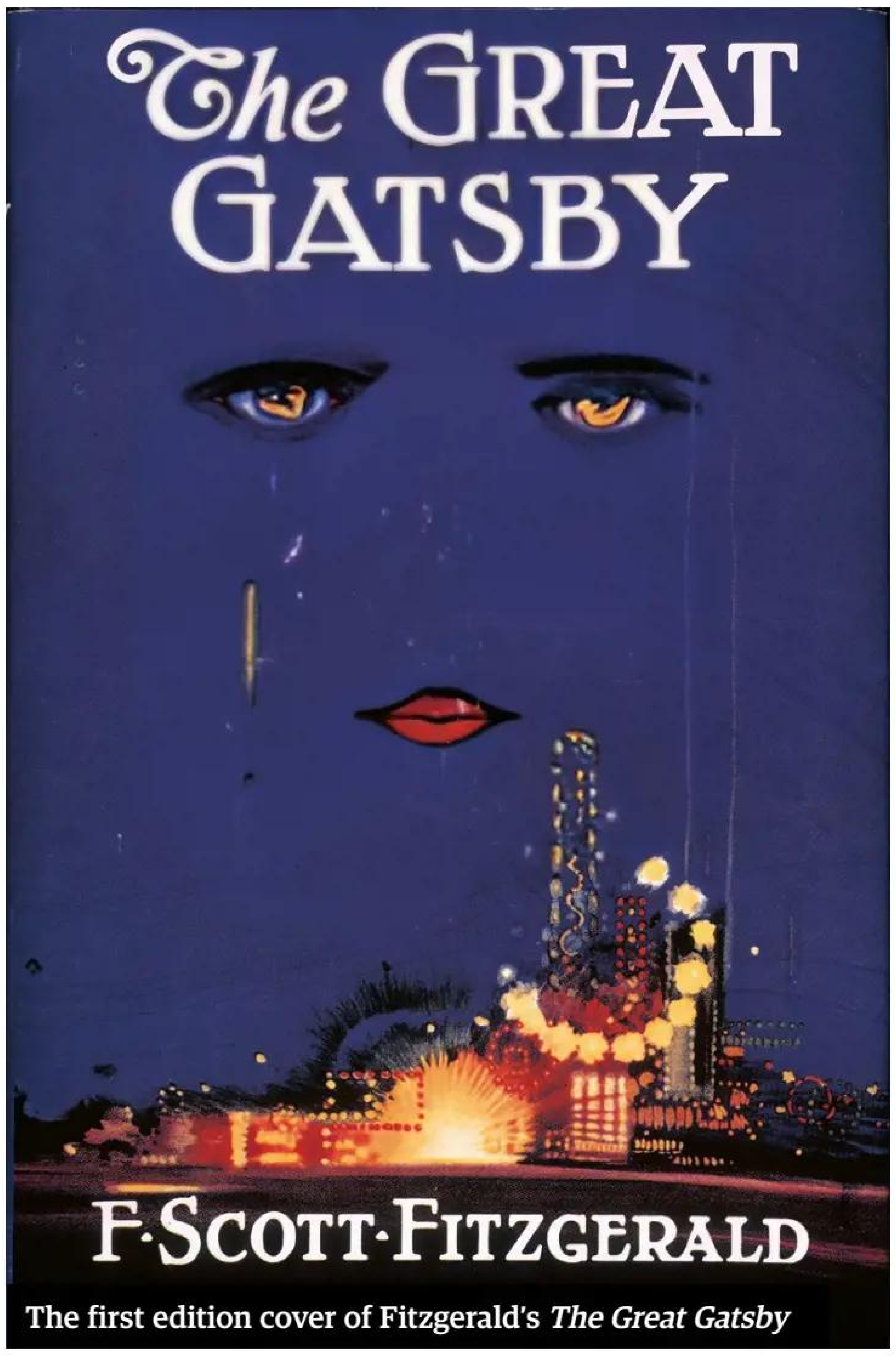
Getty Images

Ernest Hemingway popularised the term the Lost Generation

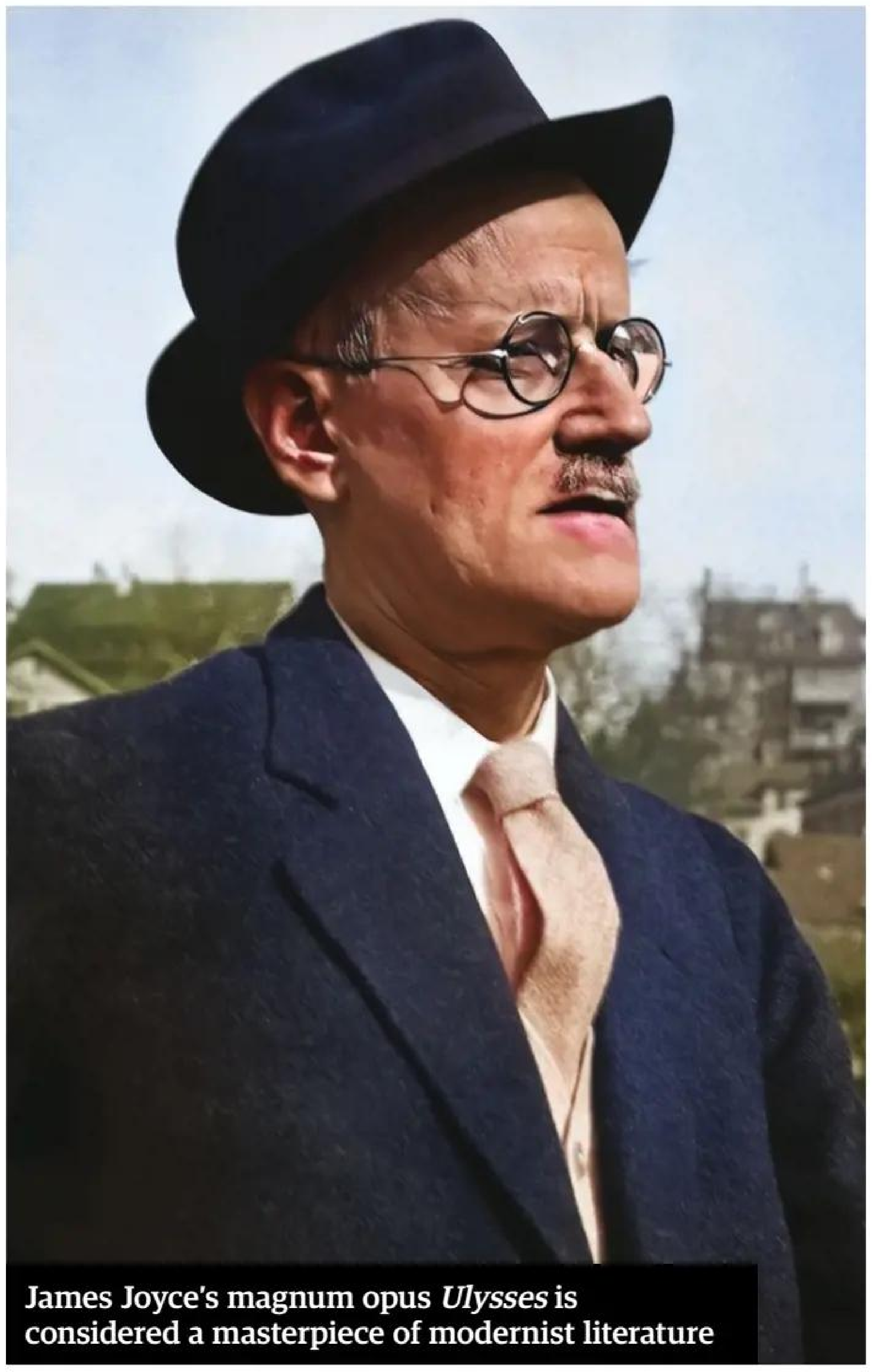
THE LOST GENERATION

The 1920s were a time of uncertainty for young people who had come of age in the shadow of the First World War. Feeling out of place and ill-equipped to face a new post-war age, this generation became known as the Lost Generation – a term coined by the American novelist and poet Gertrude Stein to sum up the general sense of disenfranchisement felt by the age group. Though the term can be applied to the entirety of this generation, the Lost Generation particularly came to define the group of American and English writers who reached adulthood during the Great War and cemented their literary successes in the 1920s. Stein, of course, became important within the membership of the Lost Generation and a central figure in the growing modernist literature movement. Her home in Paris served as a salon for the great writers of the age. Figures like F Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound and Sherwood Anderson were all guests of Stein's, along with Ernest Hemingway who popularised the term the Lost Generation in popular discourse.

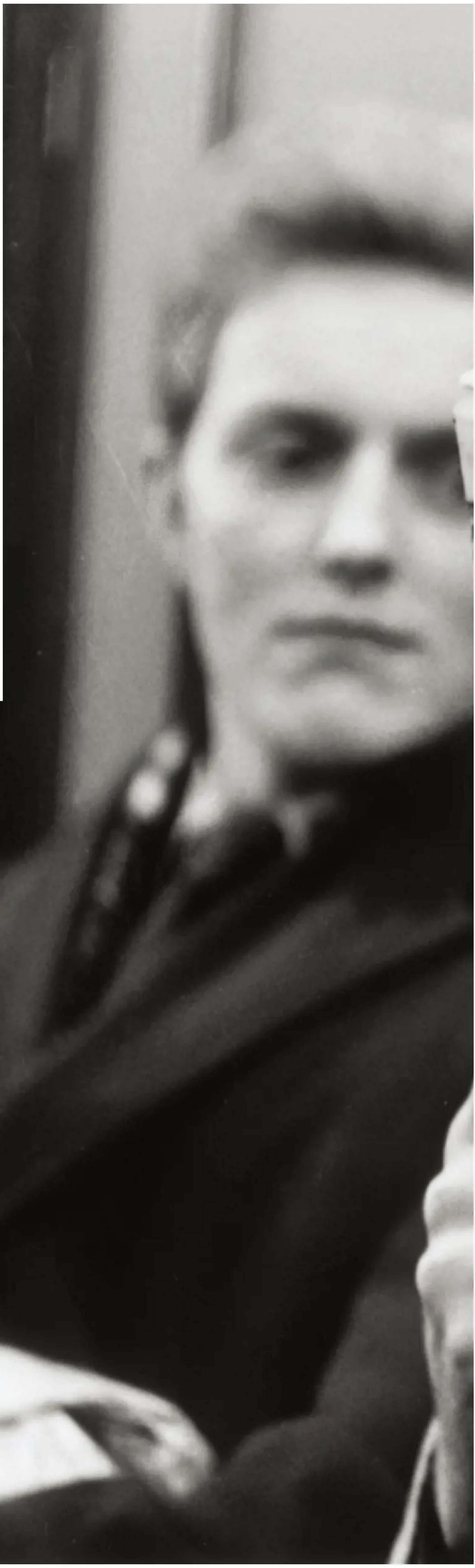
Hemingway, a journalist, writer and poet, published his first novel *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926 as well as A Farewell to Arms in 1929. Both of these works were distinctive in their post-war themes and epitomised the literary style of the Lost Generation. Poet TS Eliot's *The Waste Land*, published in 1922, is also considered by some scholars to be a lament of disillusionment following the war, though Eliot protested that this was not his intention when writing the poem. Despite the labelling of this group of writers (which also included authors such as John Steinbeck and William Faulkner) as the Lost Generation, many of those defined by the label continued in their literary careers far past the 1920s. As time progressed, their work tended to move away from the post-war themes that had defined their earlier work but nevertheless, they continued to be remembered primarily for their formative literary publications.



The first edition cover of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*



James Joyce's magnum opus *Ulysses* is considered a masterpiece of modernist literature



The ban on *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was only revoked in the UK in 1960

SEXUALITY, HEDONISM AND CENSORSHIP

After the bleakness of the previous decade, the 1920s became a time of hedonism and decadence as young people baulked against the traditional moral values that had been instilled in them in the pre-war period. Partying, drinking and sex became major themes in many novels of the decade, like Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and while a new generation of writers may have been ready to confront these subjects, not everybody was ready to read about it. British author DH Lawrence made a splash when he published his notorious novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in Florence in 1928. The book was largely considered to be scandalous upon its initial publication, with its exploration of the importance of sex in relationships and its inclusion of steamy scenes that depicted graphic sex between the title character, the married Lady Chatterley, and her gamekeeper. Lawrence was unable to commercially publish the novel due to its controversial themes, and the book was banned in several countries including the UK, US and Australia, while publishers of the book in countries such as Japan and India were prosecuted.

Themes of sexuality were also explored in the novel *Chéri* by French writer Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (known as Colette) which was published in 1920. In *Chéri*, Colette tells the story of an older woman, Léa de Lonval, and her lover, a young man half her age. Notable for its discussion of sexual desire in older people, there appears to have been little backlash against the publication of *Chéri*, and certainly nothing like that experienced by Lawrence. Arguably one of the most lauded publications of the 1920s was James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922). An epic novel that followed a day in the lives of three residents of Dublin, Ireland, the book is famous for parallelling the structure of Homer's *Odyssey* as well as being written as a stream of consciousness. Now considered to be the definitive example of modernist literature, *Ulysses* was also subject to censorship upon its initial publication due to certain passages depicting masturbation being deemed obscene. The entire novel was banned in the UK until 1936 and certain chapters were banned in the US.

Getty Images, Alamy

TIMES
PROGRESS
IS
OUR
TRADITION
OLDSMOBILE
PENGUIN BOOKS
LADY
CHATTERLEY'S
LOVER
D.H.
WRENCE

Playwright Noel Coward was a frequent customer of the fashionable speakeasy known as the Marlborough House on New York's East Side

Getty Images

THE SPEAKEASY PHENOMENON

THE CLANDESTINE SPEAKEASIES, WHERE ILLEGAL ALCOHOL FLOWED FREELY, OWED THEIR EXISTENCE TO PROHIBITION AND BECAME AN ICONIC ELEMENT OF THE ROARING TWENTIES

For all its grand and moral intent, the era of Prohibition failed to end the consumption of alcoholic beverages in America. Instead, wrapped in the success of the temperance movement's victory with the 18th Amendment was a recipe for disaster – even more virulent than a stout shot of whiskey.

Rather than wiping out demon liquor, Prohibition drove drinking underground and ushered in a reign of mayhem and racketeering, steered largely by the kingpins of organised crime. Among the offspring of Prohibition were the appalling criminal activities of extortion and murder, corruption of public officials and law enforcement officers, and the undercurrent of a black market in liquor that thrived just out of sight. Perhaps the most influential child of Prohibition was the speakeasy, the clandestine bar or goodtime house, born of the era when the manufacture, transport and sale of alcohol were forbidden by law.

Logically, the birth of the speakeasy was inevitable. The allure of the secretive nightclub, its illicit offerings, and the atmosphere of glamour it engendered were irresistible. Arguably, the consumption of alcohol increased rather than diminished during Prohibition, and the heyday of the speakeasy was largely responsible for this startling unintended consequence. The speakeasy, often operating as a secret adjunct to a legitimate storefront restaurant, grocery store or other business, evoked a spirit of adventure and participation in an activity that the patron could not reconcile as being against the law. Prior to the establishment of Prohibition as the law of the land in the United States, having a drink was considered by many as just good adult-oriented fun, a socially acceptable activity.

The term 'speakeasy' was popularised in reference to the drinking and entertainment establishments that sprouted across the country when formerly highly visible bars and nightclubs were shut down. Various theories as to the origin of the term itself include old-time references to bars where patrons were encouraged to maintain decorum and 'speak easily' to avoid confrontations with one another or the authorities. Others assert that it was derived from the mysterious and cautious management of the illegal bars that urged secrecy to protect their franchises. Still another suggestion is that the term speakeasy came into common usage with the whisper of a password to gain entry through a hidden or locked door – the uttering of something as simple and familiar as "Joe sent me," might assure the bouncer that the party was interested in a good time instead of making arrests.

The speakeasy, also referred to as a 'blind pig', a 'blind tiger', or simply a 'gin joint', helped usher in a transformation of the American social experience. Clouds of smoke wafted towards the ceiling in low light, while jazz artists and dancers performed, sometimes invitingly close to those being entertained. The wealthy and well-known mingled with the ordinary citizen, the flapper with the businessman and the wage earner. Colour barriers were diminished as both whites and blacks drank, chatted, danced and even romanced.

The main draw for the speakeasy, though, was the liquor, and it flowed freely, more freely than ever before in American history. The speakeasies in major cities became focal points of evening entertainment and diversion, and at their peak in New York the city was said to be home to as many as 100,000 such secret establishments.

Business goes on as usual in this speakeasy where bartenders wear neat white tunics and mix the drinks of the day

That number was rivalled in Chicago, and the illegal bars also flourished in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston and Miami. Prohibition had opened the door for organised crime to exploit a new and free-flowing revenue stream, and though some entrepreneurial individuals opened their own drinking establishments in basements, garages and back rooms, the majority of the speakeasies were operated by the mob. In Chicago, Al Capone controlled up to 20,000 such establishments and made millions during the 1920s, dominating the flow of bootleg liquor into the city and its distribution to an extensive, thirsting speakeasy clientele.

In New York, Charles 'Lucky' Luciano was raking in $12 million annually by 1925 and clearing one-third of that sum after paying off police officers and public officials and covering the purchase of vast quantities of bootleg liquor imported from around the world. Luciano and his cohorts ran the largest bootlegging operation on the US East Coast, dominating black market alcohol commerce in New York, Philadelphia and across the state of New Jersey. He brought in whiskey from Canada, rum from the Caribbean, and expensive champagne and wines from Italy and France.

At times, the effort of law enforcement to shut down the speakeasies seemed to be an effort in futility – like battling the mythical hydra. While one speakeasy was raided, its liquor confiscated and destroyed and its proprietor jailed, three more sprang up to take its place. When these were identified and shuttered, the original was back in operation under the same recently released management. Officials in New Jersey actually claimed that after Prohibition took effect there were ten times as many illegal drinking establishments in the state as in pre-Prohibition days. In Boston, four speakeasies operated with impunity on the same street as the city's police headquarters. To avoid detection, the owners of speakeasies went to great lengths to conceal their operations. Trap doors, back-alley entrances, heavy curtains, hidden staircases and switches that turned shelves around were just a few of the inventive methods employed to avoid the long arm of the law. One of Capone's favourite Chicago haunts, the Green Mill, was built with a secret passage that allowed customers to quietly slip away if police officers came nosing around.

In New York's 21 Club, a secret cellar safely held up to 2,000 bottles of bootleg liquor, while bottles could be thrown down invisible chutes, the doors were obscured, and the bartender could press a button that would flip a revolving bar shelf around. Another button dropped liquor bottles from a shelf straight down a chute into a cellar equipped with a drain.

Speakeasies advertised surreptitiously through word of mouth, and as risk of discovery increased, passwords used to gain entry might be supplemented by a secret knock or even a membership card. The Stork Club on East 51st Street in New York issued cards to regular clients, and holding one of these earned the bearer a measure of prestige. In some instances, the liquor purchase was a quick, straightforward transaction. A patron walked up to a heavy door with a pair of slits cut into it. Placing his order, he slipped payment into a tray under the watchful eye of the unknown bartender on the other side. In a moment, the drink was sent back through in the tray and both slits were closed. Other venues, known as clip joints, were disreputable establishments that took advantage of unwitting customers, luring them inside with the promise of pretty girls and tasty drinks. Once the victim was inebriated sufficiently he was often robbed, beaten and thrown into the street.

However, these establishments were not indicative of the speakeasy mystique, the phenomenon that has come to characterise the era of Prohibition and the carefree, hedonistic and debauched lifestyle of the Roaring Twenties. Public support for Prohibition was always lukewarm at best, and the post-World War I euphoria combined with greater social involvement and freedom for women who smoked openly, bobbed their hair and enjoyed new freedom of expression. The great migration brought African Americans to the cities of the North where they found jobs, and the rise of the 'Jazz Age', a phrase coined by the author F Scott Fitzgerald, launched legendary entertainment careers. Jazz singers and musicians found large,

Getty Images

Duke Ellington and his orchestra pose in Chicago. The group was also a fixture at New York's Cotton Club

A youthful Ella Fitzgerald wowed speakeasy audiences with her rich, soulful voice during the Prohibition era

THE ART OF MIXOLOGY

SPEAKEASY CUSTOMERS DECRIED THE POOR TASTE OF BATHTUB GIN OR WATERED DOWN INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL. MAKING USE OF AVAILABLE SUPPLIES, CREATIVE BARTENDERS COMBINED THE LIQUOR WITH SUGAR, FRUIT JUICE, SOFT DRINKS OR CREAM TO INVENT PALATABLE MIXED DRINKS THAT REMAIN POPULAR TODAY

BRANDY ALEXANDER

A blend of cream, cognac, and crème de cacao, the Brandy Alexander is a classic that appeared in *The Savoy Cocktail Book*, written by bartender Harry Craddock, who went to London in 1920 and returned a decade later to blend European and American recipes into a number of memorable drinks.

AVIATION

Bartender Hugo Ensslin created the Aviation at Hotel Wallick in New York early in the 20th century, and it appeared in his 1916 book *Recipes for Mixed Drinks*. As Prohibition came along, Harry Craddock altered the recipe of gin, lemon juice, maraschino liqueur and crème de violette, omitting the last, scarce, ingredient.

MARTINI

Although its origin predates Prohibition, variations on the classic Martini made it a distinctly American drink during the period. The Martini consists primarily of London dry gin, dry vermouth and optional bitters strained into a chilled cocktail glass. A dirty Martini contains a splash of olive juice or brine.

VANILLA MILK PUNCH

On the eve of Prohibition, *Thrift* magazine published numerous mixed-drink recipes as a service to its readers – but the alcohol was conspicuously absent from each one. Vanilla Milk Punch had vanilla extract, sugar, an egg, milk, nutmeg and, oh yes, bourbon, brandy or rum – shaken well with ice and strained.

LEAP YEAR

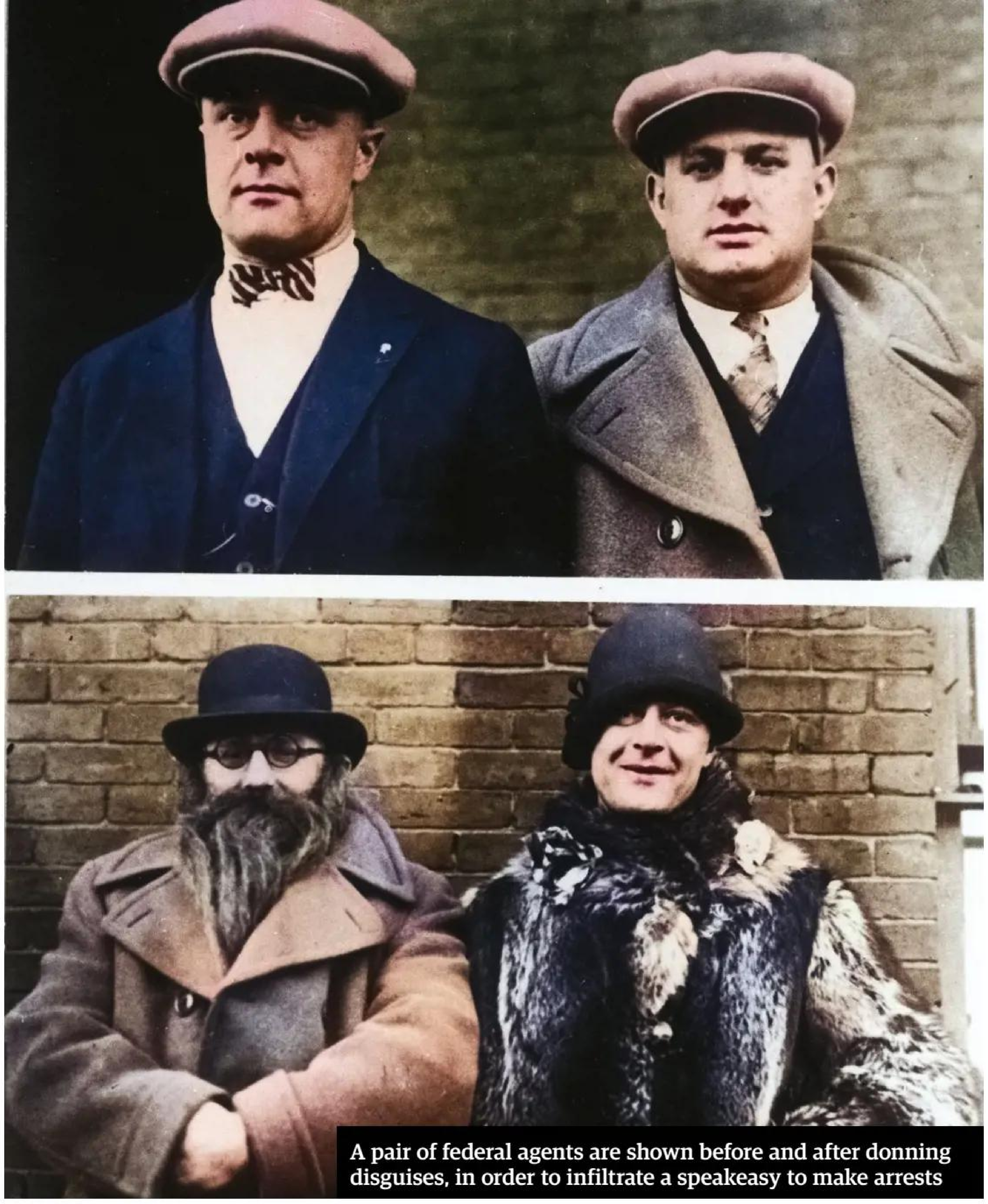
Another of Harry Craddock's Prohibition-era creations was the Leap Year cocktail. Craddock brought together two ounces of gin, a dash of lemon juice, half ounces of sweet vermouth and grand marnier, and then shook them well with ice, straining the mixture into a glass.

Getty Images

Prohibition agents stand over a haul of booze confiscated from a speakeasy receptive and appreciative audiences and gained fame in these venues where 'speakeasy' was a term in sharp contrast to the loud, boisterous nightlife experience.

As speakeasy crowds grew, so did the demand for live entertainment, appealing to patrons while table service became more common as ladies often disliked sitting at bars. Food was transformed as well, and the modern concept of the restaurant matured with menu items and 'exotic' fare, such as Italian cuisine. At times, the available alcohol was of dubious quality, bathtub gin or rotgut industrial alcohol tainted with chemical additives that were watered down. To disguise their bad taste, these were mixed with fruit juices, soft drinks or other pleasant liquids, giving rise to a new generation of mixed drinks, many of which have become staple offerings in modern drinking establishments. Dating also came into vogue as young men and women socialised without the direct supervision of parents or other older adults. The speakeasy, therefore, influenced every aspect of American social life, reaching far beyond its closed doors and smoke-filled revelry rooms.

Decades after the wane of the speakeasy with the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the legend of these venues lives on. Old photographs and tales of partying have conjured a wave of nostalgia, and some of the clubs operate legitimately even today. In New York, the most famous speakeasies included the 21 Club on West 52nd Street, where actors and entertainers such as Frank Sinatra and Humphrey Bogart were frequent visitors; Casa Blanca, where mob



A pair of federal agents are shown before and after donning disguises, in order to infiltrate a speakeasy to make arrests

THE SPEAKEASY LINGO

ALWAYS IN THE SHADOWS, THE CULTURE OF THE SPEAKEASY DEVELOPED ITS OWN LANGUAGE AND CODE WORDS WHILE THE ESTABLISHMENTS STAYED HIDDEN

When the speakeasy rose to prominence during Prohibition, a language all its own sprang up. Those who patronised the speakeasy called the main attraction anything but liquor. They referred to it as tarantula juice, panther sweat, coffin varnish and hooch. Those who took advantage when free drinks were offered were called 'cellar smellers'.And then there was the danger associated with drinking illicit alcohol, either made in unsafe conditions or with poisonous ingredients. One example of an alcohol-induced malady was the 'Jake walk' or 'Jake foot', describing a debilitating side effect of doctored Jake, a medicine with high alcohol content and Jamaican ginger. When the authorities wanted the ginger content elevated to prevent the medicine from being over-prescribed, bootleggers also added a plasticiser, tricresyl phosphate, a powerful neurotoxin, to keep it drinkable. The result was devastating to thousands who indulged. They developed the strange gait and sometimes became permanently paralysed. Singer Asa Martin crooned about Jake Walk Papa.

Speakeasy slang began to creep into everyday use, and soon people were frequently using 'Skid Row' to define an area where habitual drunkards lay about, rather than its original meaning from the logging trade where timber slid into the harbours of the Pacific Northwest. Other slang terms referred to every element of a night on the town, when revellers got all 'dolled up' in their 'glad rags' to have a 'scronch' and 'beat their gums', spending all their 'mazuma' – in other words, dressing well, heading to a speakeasy for a few drinks and a dance, and socialising until all their money was gone!

Customers crowd a Prohibition-era speakeasy as the bartenders work to fill orders and conversation is lively

Getty Images

Bartender Harry Craddock, who gained notoriety during Prohibition, mixes a drink for a thirsty patron in London's Savoy Hotel

QUEEN OF THE NIGHT CLUBS

TEXAS GUINAN WAS A WELL-KNOWN SPEAKEASY PROPRIETOR DURING THE PROHIBITION ERA IN NEW YORK CITY

Mary Louise Cecilia Guinan was better known as 'Texas', since she hailed from the city of Waco in the Southwestern state. Born in 1884, she worked as a female lead in numerous silent films, particularly Westerns as she portrayed gun-toting and horseback-riding cowgirls in more than 30 productions. She was lured to New York following an introduction to mobster Larry Fay and began working as a hostess at his El Fey club. She went on to gain a reputation as an entertainer in her own right, engaging customers in lively conversation and greeting them with her familiar "Hello suckers!". Guinan opened her own speakeasies after leaving Fay, and when law enforcement officers arrested her in 1927 she claimed she was only the hostess at her 300 Club. The jury found her innocent of violating the Volstead Act. Interestingly, she only drank coffee. Later, Texas took a stage show on the road and starred as Texas Malone, a character based on her own persona, in the movie *Queen of the Night Clubs*. In November 1933, while performing in Vancouver, Washington, she became seriously ill with ulcerative colitis. She died the next day during emergency surgery. It is said that up to 12,000 mourners attended her lavish funeral in New York.

Actress and speakeasy owner Texas Guinan relaxes in 1933, the year of her untimely death just before the end of Prohibition

boss Larry Fay sold whiskey he had smuggled into the US from Canada and was gunned down by an angry doorman in 1932; and both the 300 Club and Club Intime, owned by Texas Guinan, one of the most colourful figures of the shadowy speakeasy scene, who always insisted to law enforcement agents that she had brought her own liquor to the establishments rather than purchasing bootleg alcohol. Club Intime was located next door to the heavily trafficked Polly Adler brothel in midtown Manhattan. The famed Stork Club on West 58th Street was owned by bootlegger Sherman Billingsley, and writers Robert Benchley and Dorothy Parker frequented the Puncheon Club on West 49th Street.

At Chumley's, which opened its secret doors in the West Village in 1922, prominent literary figures of the day congregated, including Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Willa Cather, Norman Mailer, John Steinbeck, Edna St Vincent Millay and EE Cummings. Chumley's personnel originated the term '86' that has become synonymous in restaurants and bars with cancelling an order. When the joint was about to be raided, the shout of "86!" signalled customers to quickly exit through the secret door at 86 Bedford Street. The Landmark Tavern, originally an Irish saloon, was opened as a family business in 1868, the establishment on the first floor of the building and the living quarters on the second and third floors. When Prohibition arrived, the family moved its living space to the first and second floors, while the bar was relocated to a speakeasy on the third. Through 13 years of Prohibition, it was never raided by police. Uncharacteristically, the Nepenthe Club catered to men only, accommodating crowds of up to 80, and was reputed to serve the best food in New York.

Perhaps the most enduring legacy of the speakeasy, the Jazz Age, and legendary entertainment belongs to the Cotton Club, a glittering mecca in Harlem. Themed as a merry cotton plantation, the Cotton Club was frequented by white patrons, while most of its servers and staff were black. Crime boss Owney Madden ran the club, which featured such entertainment luminaries as Duke Ellington and his orchestra, Ella Fitzgerald, Cab Calloway, Count Basie and Lena Horne. Contending for preeminence in entertainment, Connie's Inn hosted some of the best known jazz entertainers of the Roaring Twenties, including legends such as Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller. Also located in Harlem, Connie's Inn was owned by Conrad Immerman and his brothers, George and Louie, who had emigrated from Latvia and ran a delicatessen along with a thriving bootlegging operation. Patrons of these competing clubs and others danced the Lindy Hop, the Foxtrot and Charleston, and they drank… and drank. At another Cotton Club, one of Chicago's finest speakeasies located in Cicero, jazz greats performed to packed houses, and the enterprise was run by Al Capone's brother, Ralph. Even Chicago mayor Jim 'Big Bill' Thompson was a patron. Armstrong recorded a drinking song called 'Knockin' a Jug', and Bessie Smith sang the line "Any bootlegger sure is a pal of mine," on her hit titled 'Me and My Gin'.

When the Wall Street stock market crash struck on 29 October 1929, the carefree days of the speakeasy quickly began to wane. Their numbers worked against them, and disposable income plummeted, causing many of the establishments to close their doors, something law enforcement officers had never been able to accomplish. Speakeasy owners became targets for a wave of prosecutions on tax-evasion charges rather than bootlegging counts, and the need for government tax revenue and job creation contributed to the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. Like Prohibition itself, the speakeasy faded from the limelight, its memory an enduring aspect of a bygone era. Still, it played a dynamic role that transcended the base need for a stiff drink. It was the place where varied cultures flowed together and became an amalgamation of perspectives on life and living. In its own way, the speakeasy continues to influence the American experience.

Getty Images

In 1928, Louis Armstrong was a young jazz trumpet player. He would go on to play jazz all over the world as part of numerous bands and as a successful solo player. His fame even landed him a spot in the Hollywood production of *Hello Dolly!*

THE JAZZ AGE

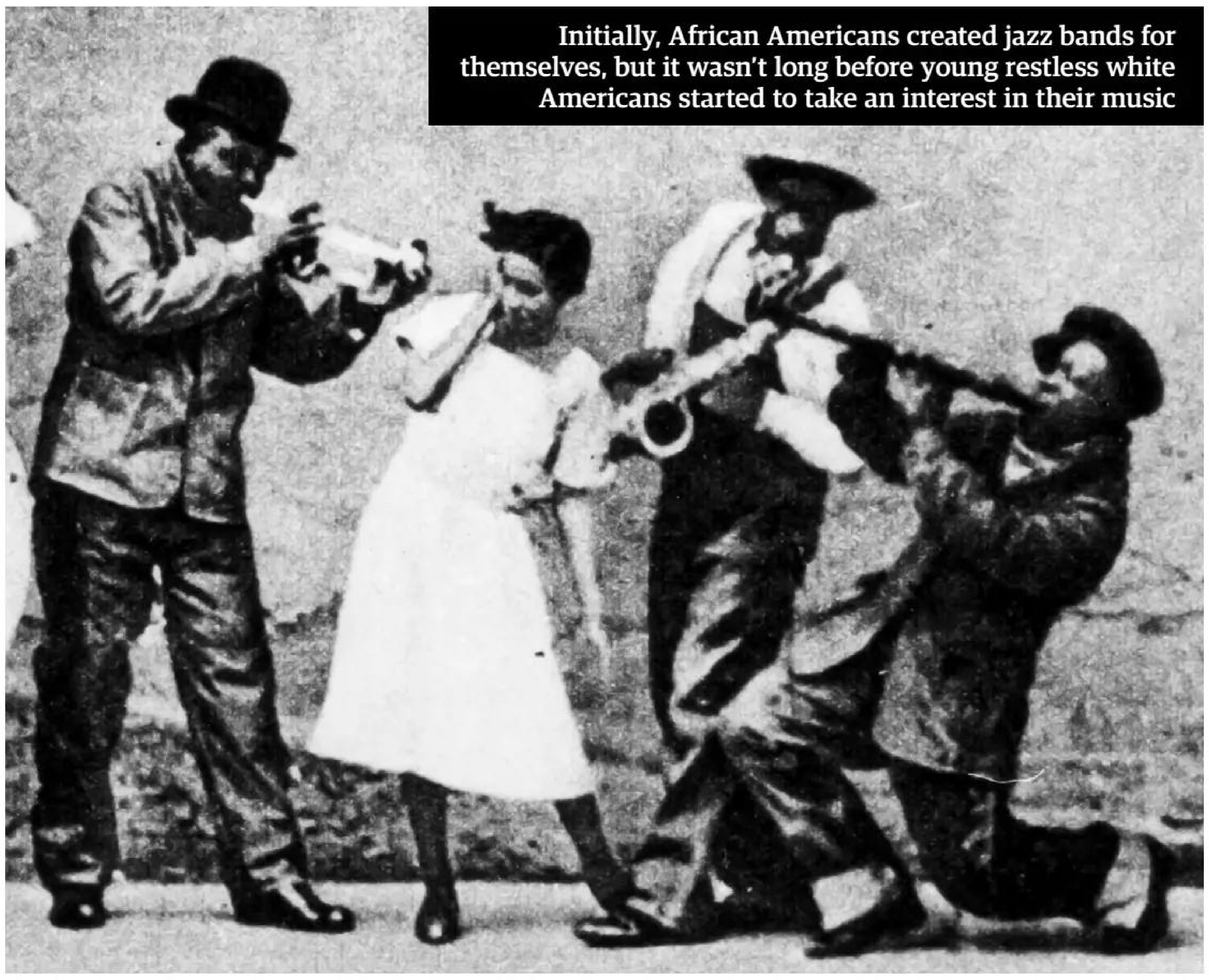
THE MUSIC SPREAD ACROSS AMERICA LIKE WILDFIRE AND SET THE WESTERN WORLD ALIGHT WITH ITS CRAZY, BLARING SOUNDS. MEANWHILE, THE FRENETIC DANCING THAT THRILLED THE ADVENTUROUS 'FLAPPERS', HORRIFIED THE LESS PROGRESSIVE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY WHO WERE SCANDALISED BY ITS ACCOMPANYING DECADENT BEHAVIOUR. WELCOME TO THE JAZZ AGE!

WORDS: **DR. JOANNA ELPHICK**

Whilst the economic boom in America kick-started the enormous cultural changes of the 1920s, it was the jazz music that acted as its decade-long soundtrack and arguably put the 'roar' in the Roaring Twenties. Before jazz exploded into the consciousness of middle-class America, white people were enjoying the musical delights of Broadway, a variety of rousing marches, and popular saucy vaudeville songs. However, it was the syncopated beats of Ragtime, played throughout the last decades of the 19th century, that would usher in the revolutionary Age of Jazz.

THE HONKY-TONK PIANO MEN

Ragtime was enormously popular from around 1893, where it was introduced to the masses at the Chicago World Fair, and lasted until 1917. Its bouncy melodies were played on the piano at an exhilarating pace by stars such as Louis Chauvin, Thomas M. Turpin, and most notably, Scott Joplin, the 'King of Ragtime', but it was initially played by and, most importantly, for African-Americans. To begin with, white Americans were unaware of the honky-tonk pianists playing in the seedy New Orleans bordellos and backstreet saloons of Mississippi, but gradually the infectious rhythms found their way into elegant society and began making their mark on mainstream popular culture. Just as jazz would impact the dance scene throughout the twenties, Ragtime instigated new and exciting dance steps at the polite dance parties of well-to-do Americans and it wasn't long before the ragtime craze spread to England too. Raunchy 'animal' dances such as the Bunny Hug, the Grizzly Bear and the Turkey Trot were immensely popular. Regiment bands emulated the style, ultimately influencing British culture and its music. The Ragtime star may not have burned for long, but it certainly burned brightly and it tentatively introduced the musical genius of African-Americans to the white Western population, encouraging them to look beyond their own cultural constraints, and paving the way for the jazz explosion.


Initially, African Americans created jazz bands for themselves, but it wasn't long before young restless white Americans started to take an interest in their music

American novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald popularised the term 'Jazz Age' in his classic story, *The Great Gatsby*, and was known as a chronicler of the Roaring Twenties

16-year-old 'babe' Morris was a glamorous dancer who shimmied her way to fame and was ultimately named the 'Queen of Jazz'

Getty Images

It wasn't just the men that liked to play. Female jazz bands were equally popular

RISE OF THE BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS

The arrival of the 1920s and its economic boom gave many Americans a newfound sense of financial security. Suddenly, the people had money to spare and a desire to spend it on fripperies rather than the mundane necessities of life that had kept them going through World War I. There was a sense of joy in the air that refused to be contained, instigating a novel group of consumers; the 'Flappers' and their male counterparts, 'the Sheiks'. Meanwhile across the water in England, the 'Bright Young Things' were equally restless and looking for fun. These young independent adults were looking to create their own identity and they needed a musical backdrop, something that was uniquely theirs. Ragtime had introduced them to the African-American sound but the fad had faded and they wanted something new, something they could call their own.

In order to escape the oppression in the deep South, many African-Americans began moving North. Known as the Great Migration, a vast array of black musicians made their way from New Orleans to Chicago and New York, bringing their distinct musical style with them. By adding their spiritual and slave work songs, catchy ragtime tunes and folk music roots into one cultural melting pot, a new African American form of self-expression was born.

The musicians gravitated towards progressive urban areas where they were welcomed by America's youth with open arms. White middle-class New Yorkers and Chicagoans were fascinated by the avant-garde composers and their wildly original artistic endeavours. The extravagance of the Jazz Age had begun.

Although other forms of music doggedly persisted, jazz was the predominant overriding sound that filled the hearts and minds of the young people. Unlike the sedate, restrained music of the past, jazz was fast paced with the syncopated rhythms of ragtime combined with thrilling improvisation. It sounded edgy and new, reflecting the attitudes and outlook of a prosperous middle-class American society. Performers such as Duke Ellington, Jelly Roll Morton, James P Johnson and Sidney Bechet became the new American heroes, but, unlike the other leaders of jazz orchestras, it was Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong who spearheaded the rise of solo performances, making him one of the most beloved jazz musicians of all time.

Born into crippling poverty in 1901, little Louis spent his early years in the Coloured Waifs Home as a juvenile delinquent with a pitiful future ahead of him. However, it was here that he learned to play the cornet and found his love of early jazz. By 1922, he had made his way to Chicago where he joined the Creole Jazz Band, but it was in New York that he became the first great jazz soloist. In a career that spanned five decades and included both sound and film performances, Satchmo's mark on the Age of Jazz is undeniable.

Norwegian pole vault champion, Charles Hoff, dances the Charlston with Tempest Stevens

Getty Images

SATAN IN THE DANCEHALL

Prosperity brought about a new consumer culture that put the emphasis on having fun. Part of this joyous living included throwing riotous parties and socialising in public spaces. The American youth needed to let their hair down but just as the twenties were beginning to 'Roar', Congress passed the Volstead Act, banning the manufacture and sale of alcohol. This should have put a stop to the endless decadent soirees but, in truth, it only added to the thrill. The people wanted to drink, listen to jazz, and dance the night away.

Of course, dancing wasn't illegal and many dance clubs sprang up across America. Dancing was the new craze, allowing a safe outlet for the general sense of post war euphoria. Almost any type of music could be turned into a dance and jazz was no exception. However, unlike the elegant waltz or foxtrot, the youth culture craved a more exciting and frivolous dance to match their mood. It wasn't long before revellers were attempting to emulate the extraordinary dances seen in the newly developed talking pictures. After 'Gold Diggers of Broadway' was released, the dance halls were flooded with people and a variety of outrageous dance moves became all the rage. The Breakaway, Black Bottom and the famous Charleston all became very popular. Later, dances were mashed together, creating even more unusual moves such as the Lindy Hop which combined Breakaway and the Charleston into one outlandish jig.

It was possible to dance and listen to jazz almost anywhere from the luxurious city dance palaces and nightclubs to road houses situated in the rural neighbourhoods. Dance contests were frequently sponsored by the various clubs, encouraging the young to compete for popular dancing titles.

Unfortunately, the youth didn't just want to dance. Prohibition was designed to stem the tide of alcohol in America but, in reality, it drove the pastime underground, giving rise to the infamous 'speakeasies'. These illicit clubs were the perfect place for the hedonistic youth to listen to jazz, dance the night away and consume large quantities of illegal booze. In a desperate bid to stamp out sin, the authorities inadvertently created nefarious dens of iniquity. Here was a place where the cultural and racial divides blurred, where black and white, rich and poor, sat side by side, united by the jazz and the drink. It was a perfect place for the African American entertainers to work since they were often well treated by the mobster operators and were readily appreciated by the nightly clientele. Here, a jazz pianist could earn good money. Mob boss Al Capone was said to have kidnapped Fats Waller in order to get him to play in his club. For three days, Waller was given an endless supply of champagne whilst being paid $100 for every song he performed.

The jazz may have been outstanding but the alcohol was often highly dubious, and in some cases, dangerous. In a desperate bid to hide the taste of the industrial strength liquor, proprietors mixed the drinks with fruit juices, poor quality grain, and glycerin, creating various 'cocktails' for the customers who were enjoying the entertainment far too much to notice. Known as 'Bathtub Gin' due to the fact it was made with household items (ironically, never a tin bath!), the homemade alcohol was developed in small batches so that the equipment could be hidden more easily when the police came calling. Jazz and illegal drinking were so inextricably linked that the music gained a tantalisingly naughty reputation. So much so, that a town in Illinois banned the music in 1921, on the basis that it was sinful. Many other conservative Americans feared it might corrupt the morals of the young, white middle-class.

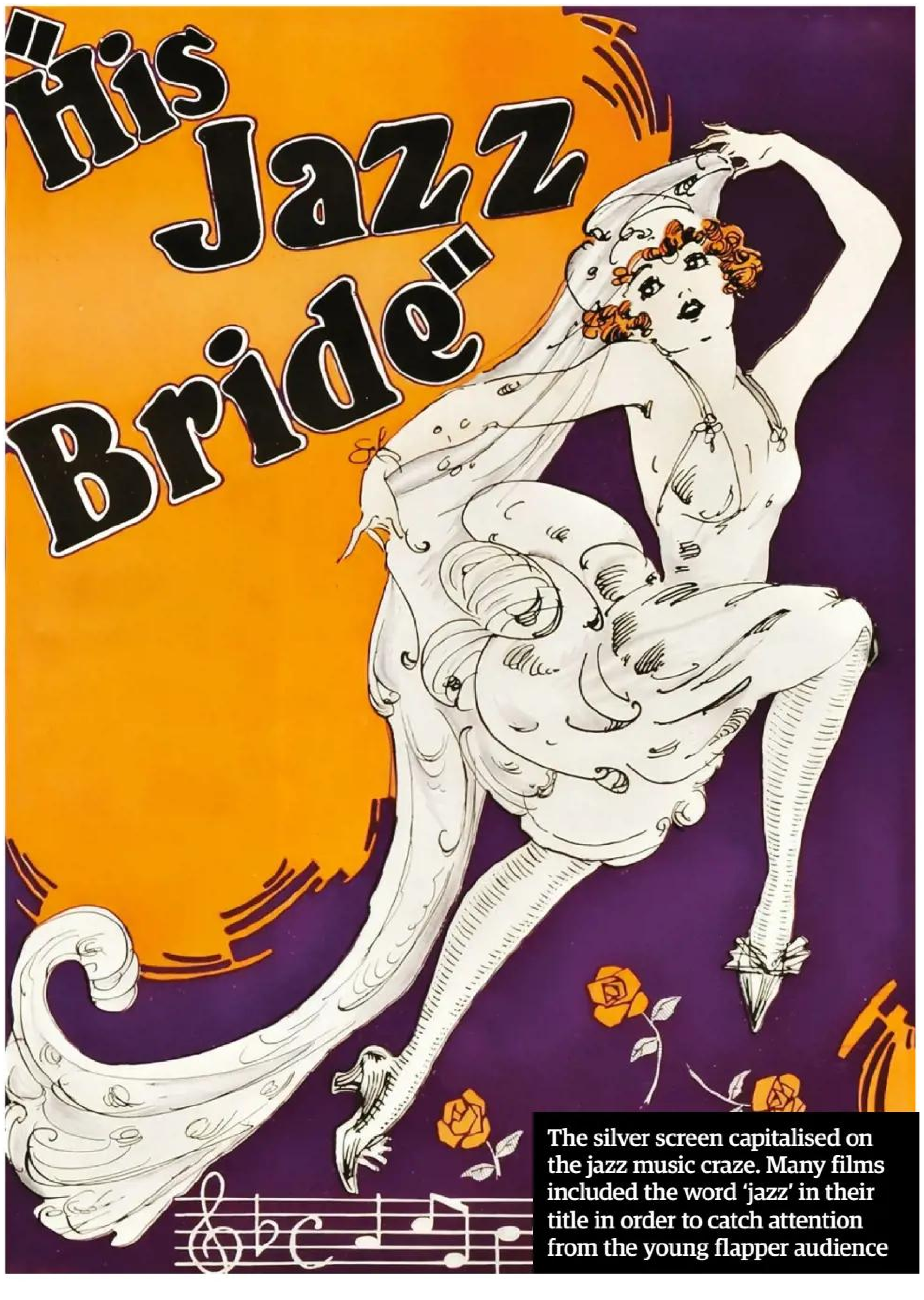
A band playing jazz music onstage in 1920s Chicago

Getty Images

RISE OF THE RADIO

If the speakeasies introduced the daring Flappers and Sheiks to jazz, it was the radio that smashed through the boundaries of the African-American people and introduced jazz into the mainstream white middle class homes. Radios were one of the most sought after devices and, although they were expensive, many economically flush families could afford one. Now, folk who were opposed to fraternising in illicit gin joints could listen to the rising jazz superstars in the comfort of their own armchair thanks to the city radio stations. By the end of the Roaring Twenties, a radio could be found in over 40% of all American homes. This new, mass broadcasting medium had the ear of the people and it quickly became an effective advertising tool. Not only could companies sell the latest technological gadgets over the airwaves, musicians could use the platform to share their talents with a wider audience.

With the invention of electrical recording in 1925, stars such as Paul Whiteman, Louis Armstrong, and Joe Oliver could promote their latest gramophone records. This in turn increased the sale of phonographs, the new 'must have' household appliance. Jazz had become respectable and could be heard in almost any middle-class dwelling. The Roaring Twenties was a thrilling time for the Western world but jazz was far more than its soundtrack. The music energised the restless youth, supported revolutionary technology and, most importantly, brought the African-American culture into the white American consciousness. Jazz music gave black performers a chance to escape the abject poverty and overwhelming oppression of their deep South roots. Of course, jazz continues to be popular today but nothing has quite lived up to that Golden Age of Jazz.



The silver screen capitalised on the jazz music craze. Many films included the word 'jazz' in their title in order to catch attention from the young flapper audience

RACE RECORDS

IN A TIME OF SEGREGATION, RACE RECORDS BEGAN TO CHIP AWAY AT THE COLOUR DIVIDE BETWEEN THE MUSIC OF THE AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE MIDDLE-CLASS WHITE AMERICAN PEOPLE

In 1925, sound recording was greatly improved with the development of electrical recording, and musical gramophone records became highly sought after. The average American could listen to their new jazz favourites on the radio but the records were produced to entice consumers into purchasing their very own phonograph. Such appliances were displayed in furniture stores across the country, some of which maintained segregation policies. In these Southern rural areas, records were also separated into ‘black’ music and ‘white’ music. As the financial economy of America improved, more and more African American people could afford a phonograph of their own and records marketed specifically to them became very popular. The 78-rpm records played blues, gospel, folk songs and, of course, jazz.

In 1922, a company called Okeh Records decided to sell the music as ‘Race Records’. Karl Hager, a white executive for the company, recorded black artist, Mamie Smith, who went on to sell 75,000 copies of her music in the first month. It seemed that ‘Race Records’ were worth investing in and Hager continued to employ black musicians. As the American people became obsessed with jazz music, they began purchasing the ‘Race Records’ and the boundary line between black and white music soon blurred. Although the term ‘Race Records’ continued into the 1940’s, the Age of Jazz saw to it that the music transcended race and colour.

As the phonograph became more and more popular, production rose from 190,000 in 1923 to 5,000,000 by 1929

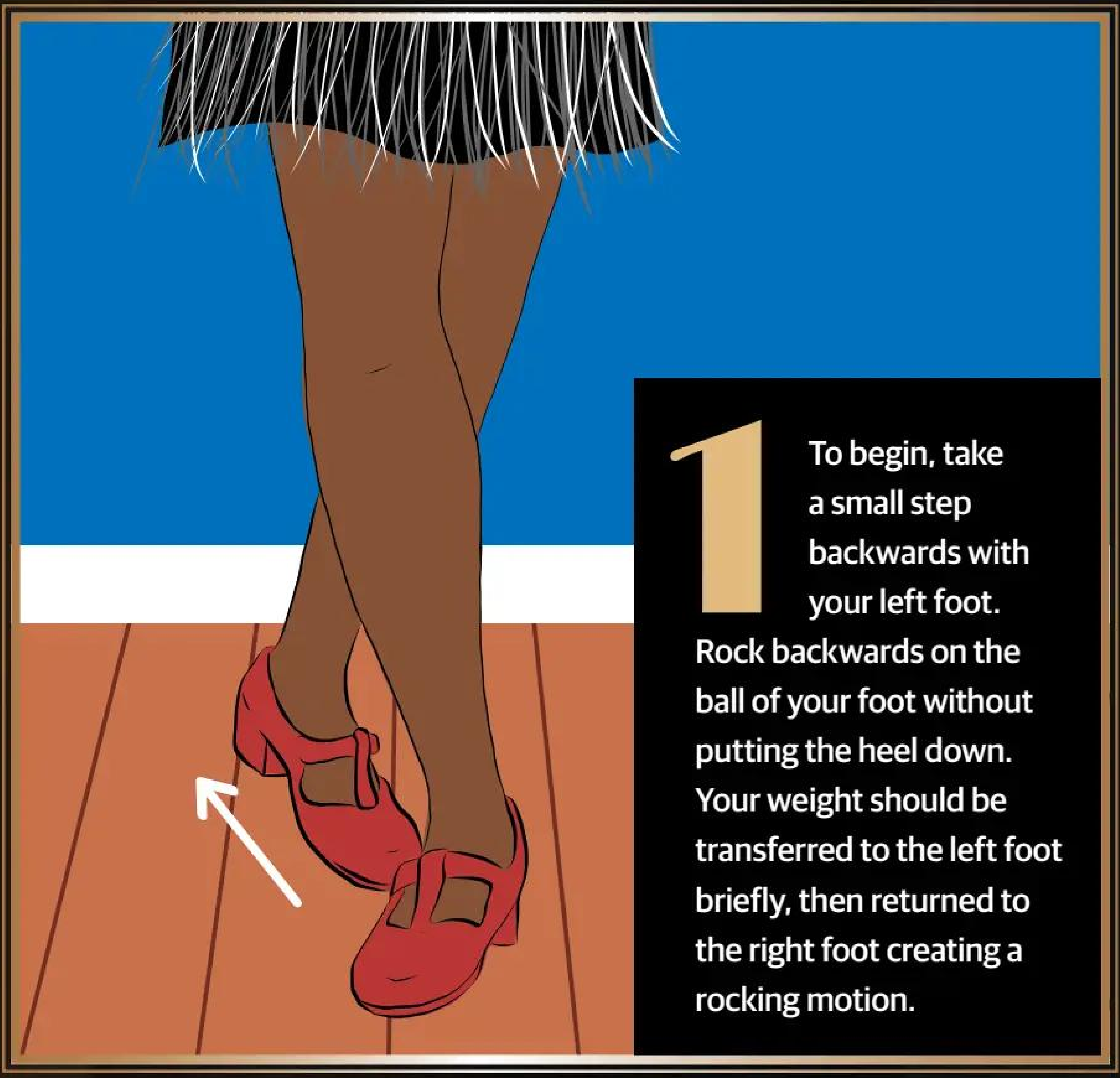
Getty Images: Hamlet Knight

DOING THE CHARLESTON

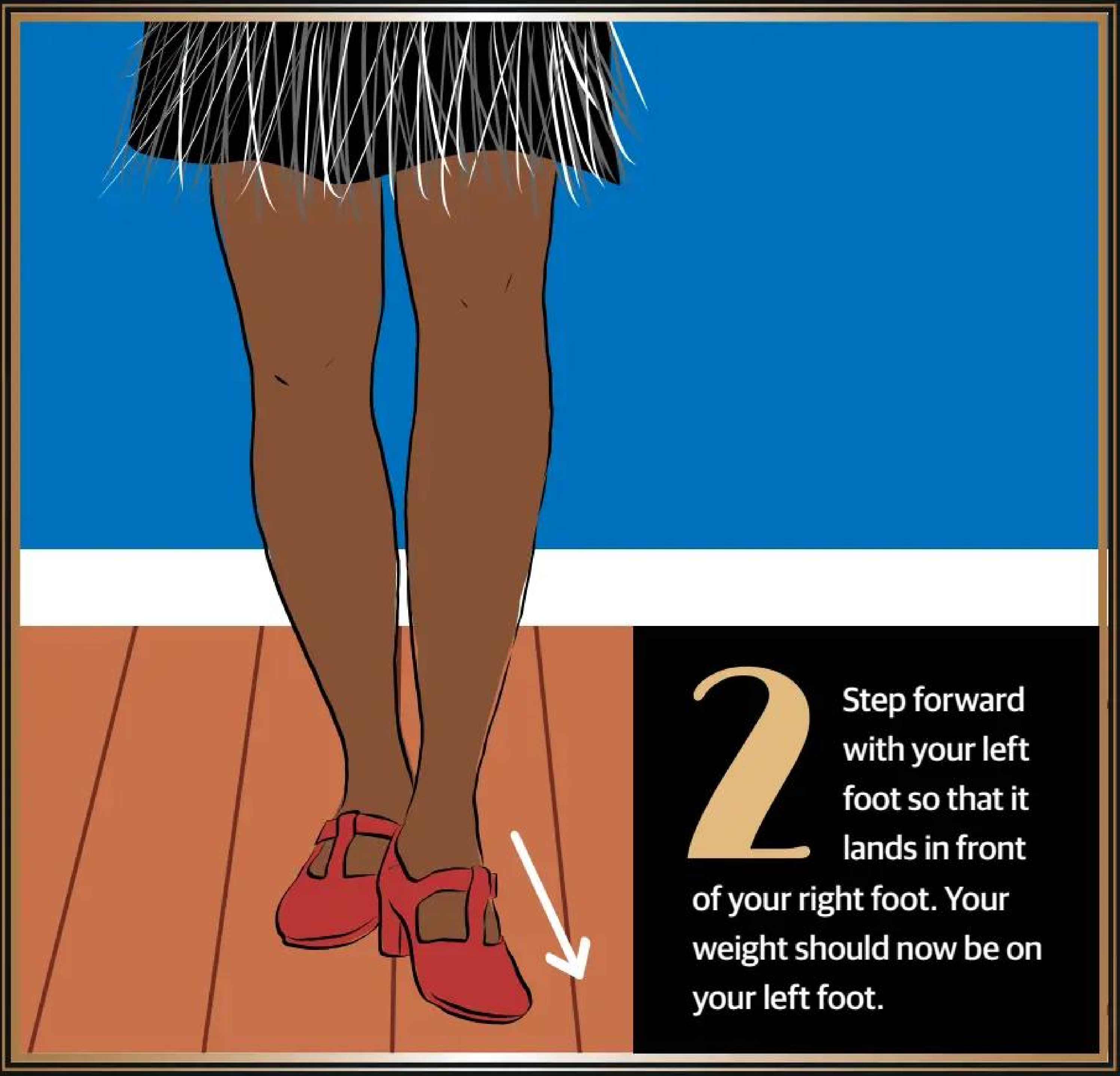
WITH ITS SIMPLE FOOTWORK AND ACCOMPANYING JAZZY MUSIC, THE CHARLESTON WAS AN INSTANT SUCCESS. THANKS TO THE BROADWAY SHOW 'RUNNIN' WILD', FLAPPERS FILLED THE DANCE HALLS IN ORDER TO BE A PART OF THE LATEST CRAZE...

WORDS: **JOANNA ELPHICK**

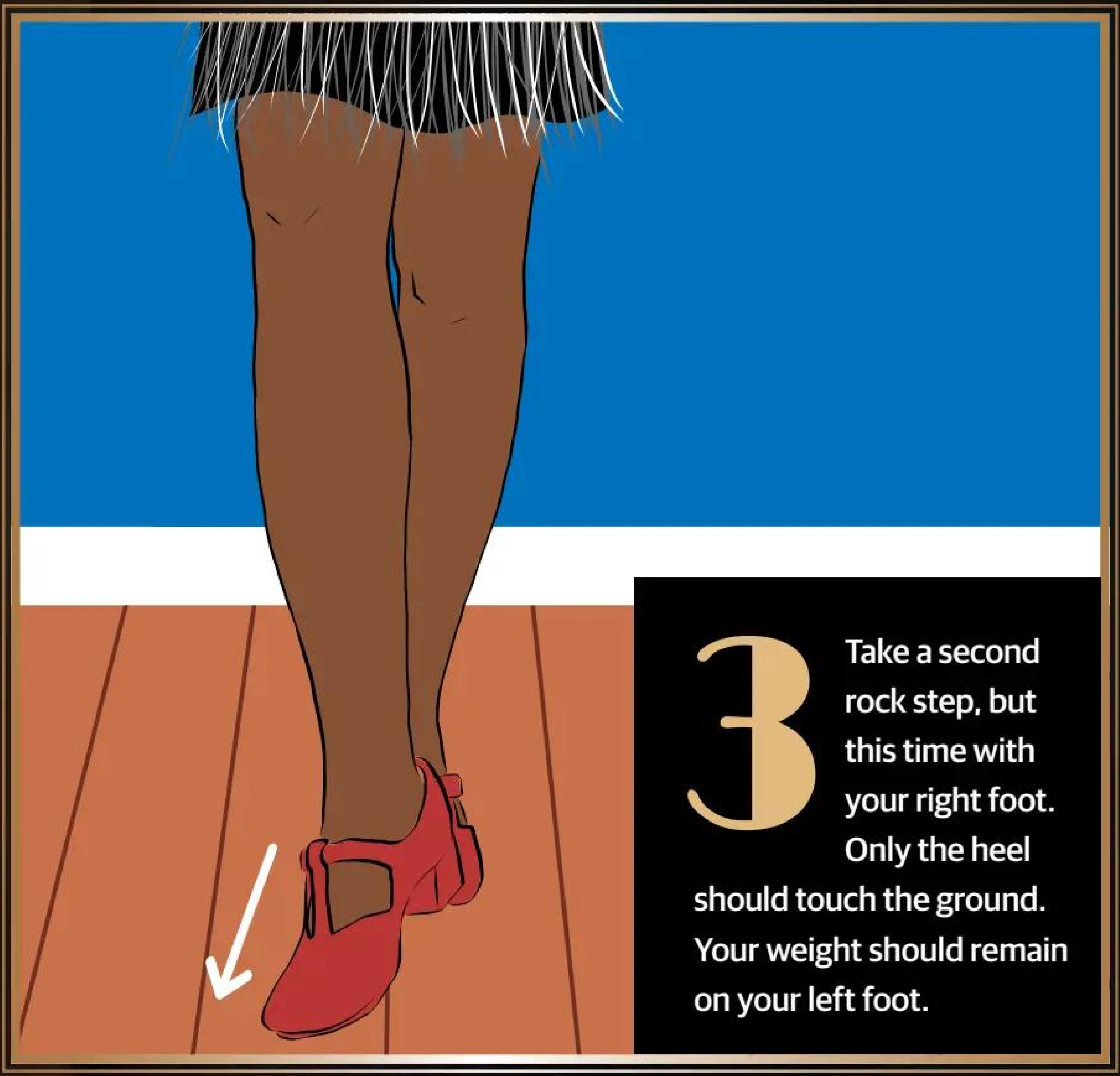
Although the exact origins and initial creators of the dance are unknown, it is thought to have been named after the city of Charleston in South Carolina. It began appearing at the beginning of the twentieth century in various stage acts across Harlem but was only known by the African American communities. However, in 1923, when jazz artist, James P. Johnson penned the song 'The Charleston' which was featured in 'Runnin' Wild', the dance was introduced to a much wider audience and quickly became a national pastime.



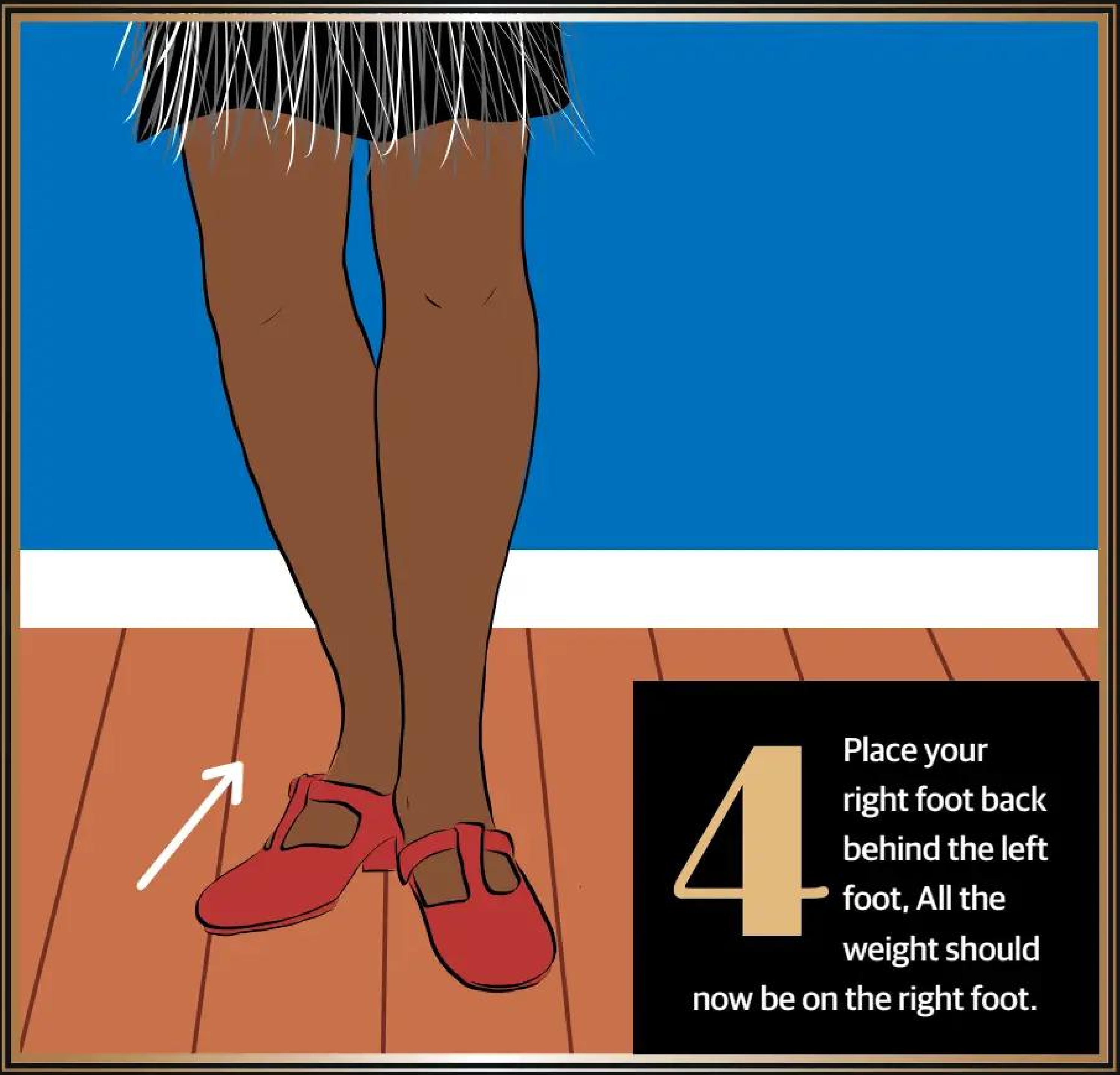
1 To begin, take a small step backwards with your left foot. Rock backwards on the ball of your foot without putting the heel down. Your weight should be transferred to the left foot briefly, then returned to the right foot creating a rocking motion.



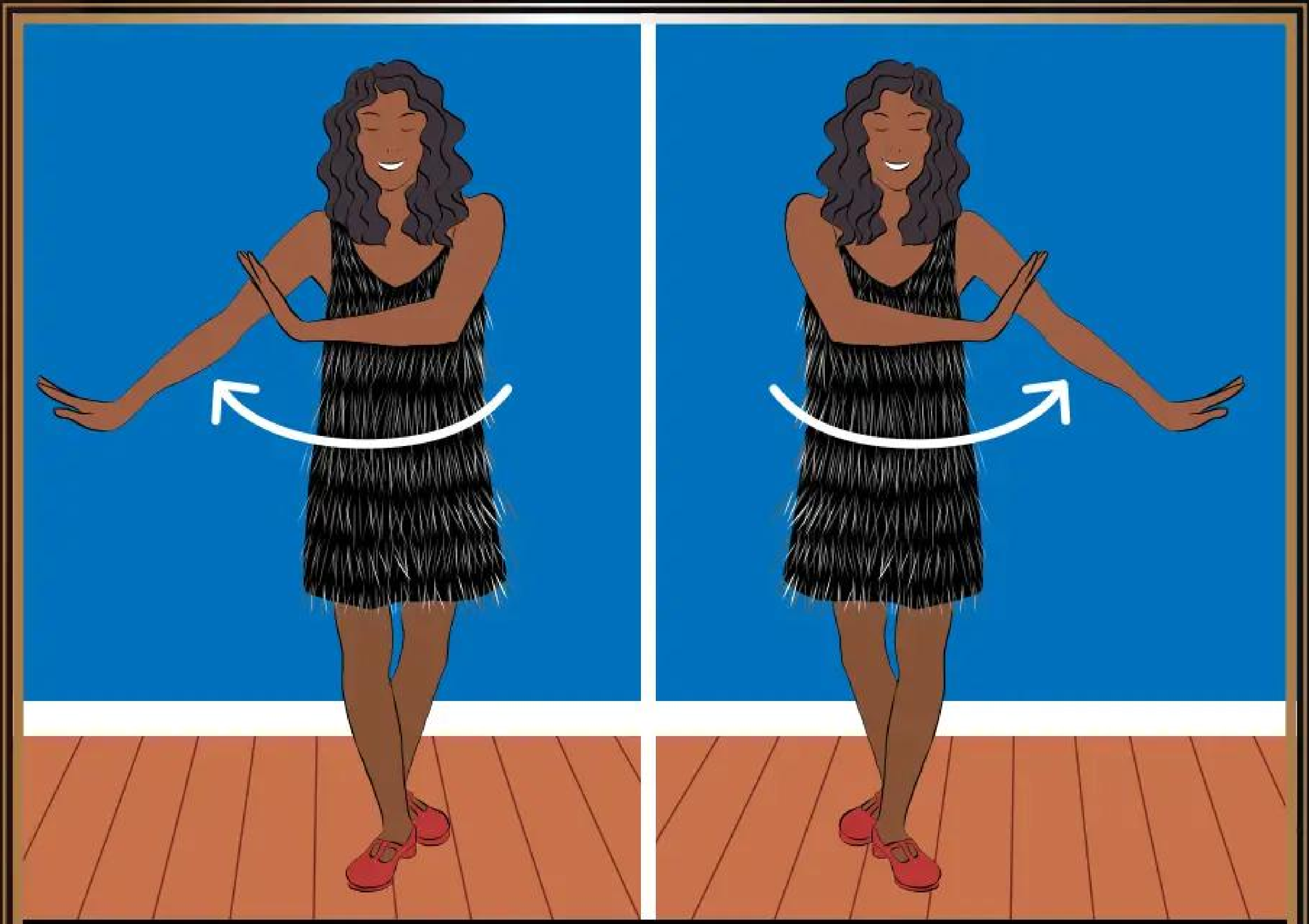
2 Step forward with your left foot so that it lands in front of your right foot. Your weight should now be on your left foot.



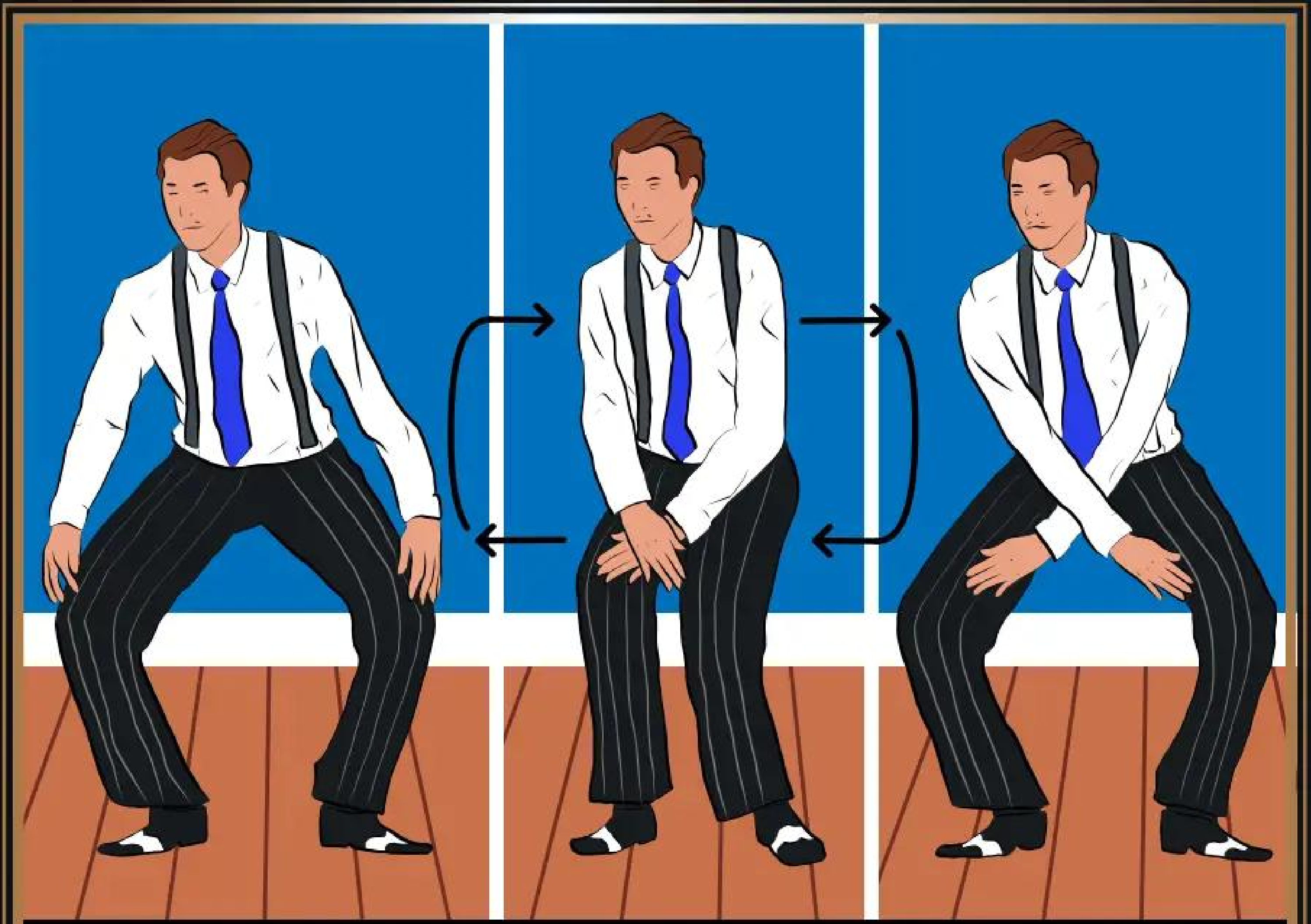
3 Take a second rock step, but this time with your right foot. Only the heel should touch the ground. Your weight should remain on your left foot.



4 Place your right foot back behind the left foot, All the weight should now be on the right foot.



5 Your arms need to swing from side to side as you take your Rock step. When your left foot is stepping forward, your right arm should swing forward and when the right foot steps in front, the left arm should swing forward.



6 Stand with your feet parallel and knees bent, move your knees towards and away from each other. At the same time, place your hands gently on your knees, then switch your hands to opposite knees before your knees move outward.

Getty Images

FABULOUS FLAPPERS

WHETHER IT WAS DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY IN THEIR FLAPPER FINERY, BEING ABLE TO VOTE, OR WORKING FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE TWENTIES WAS AN INTERESTING TIME FOR WOMEN

WORDS: CATHERINE CURZON

As the 1920s dawned, the new decade ushered in a changing world. The smoke of World War I had cleared at last and women were ready for a bright future, where the deprivations of war could be left in the past and the restrictions of pre-war domestic life might be freed by social change, technology and opportunity. For generations women had been slaves to hearth and home and, having tasted a different sort of life when their men went off to war, women didn't want to be put back in their stays ever again. Whether fighting for the vote, whooping it up on the dance floor or flashing their scandalous ankles, life would never be the same again.

INTO THE WORKFORCE

With the advent of World War I, a generation of men left their homes and workplaces and went off to fight; sadly many never returned. With men absent from the home and workforce, the jobs they had once done were assumed by women. For the first time women could flourish in the roles that had traditionally been denied to them, learning new skills and earning a wage, albeit one that was usually far below that of their male counterparts. Unsurprisingly, even when the men came home, many of these new female workers didn't want to return to their previous lives. They had a taste of freedom and their own money and they loved it.

Even for those women who went back into domestic roles, there was change on the horizon. New frontiers of technology and the introduction of electricity into homes saw the emergence of devices such as electric kettles and irons, or even vacuum cleaners. Though these were by no means available to all, for those who could afford them they saved valuable time and effort when it came to running a home – or cleaning someone else's.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

For the women who had kept the home fires burning and had no intention of extinguishing them, there was one particularly vital change: suffrage. After decades of battling for the vote, in Europe and the United States, women were finally being given a say in who ran their country. Women in Britain over the age of 30 had won the right to vote in 1918; their American sisters had to wait until 1920, but for the first time the decisions that would impact everyone in society weren't left for the men alone. Things might change slowly, but they were changing for sure.

New technology let young couples dance the night away and chaperones weren't always watching

Getty Images

Fashionable flappers and their dates cast aside the restrictions of just a few years earlier and embraced a new freedom; it was enough to make their grandmothers blush

The new flapper fashion meant women could get through the working day in relative comfort

Getty Images

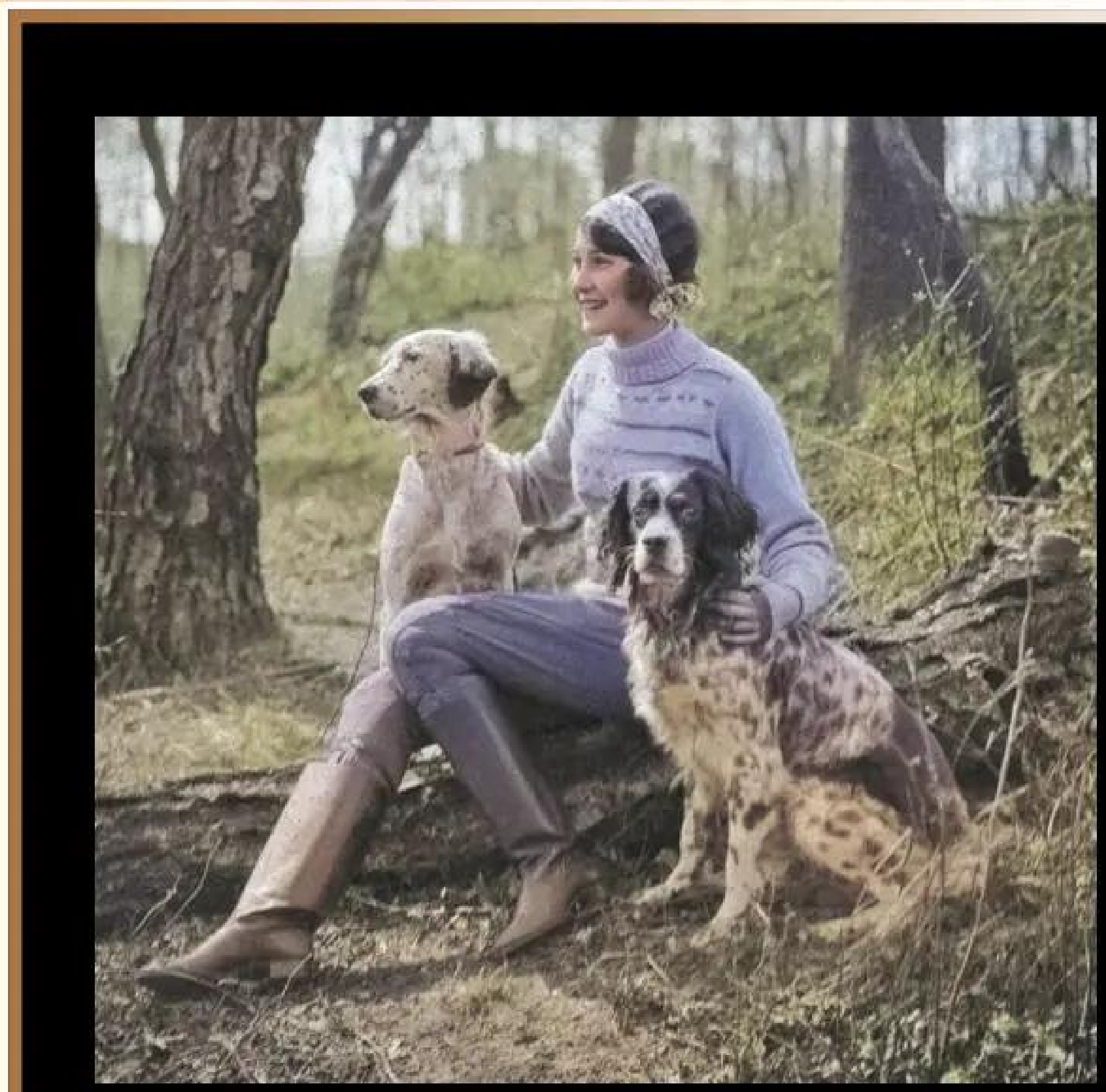
FLAPPERS AND FREEDOM

For women previously confined at home and with little to no say in the way their countries were run, with limited opportunities to earn money and the chance of any real choice of paid work often denied them, the 1920s brought a whole new frontier. As hemlines rose and corsets were flung off, girls wanted to go out and party. Flappers flashed their legs in daring new dresses and danced like no one was watching. Gone were the stately dances of their grandmothers and the restrictive clothes of their mothers, replaced by a new freedom that seemed to mirror the world that was open before them.

These new physical expressions were mirrored in attitudes to love and, though it would shock the moral majority to its core, sex as well. For the first time women were – within reason – allowed to indulge in far more public displays of flirtation and romance. New sanitary products offered young women the opportunity to keep up the pace of life whatever the time of month, and for those who wanted to add sexual freedom to their list of achievements, greater understanding of sexual health and contraception opened up even these most scandalous avenues. Yet things had only changed so much – sexual freedom was still many decades off. Flappers revelled in the bright lights and brighter opportunities, entertaining their beaus and going out on the town without even a whisper of a chaperone. Of course, society still had its expectations of so-called 'good girls' but the boundaries had shifted. Flappers didn't care about expectations, they were too busy partying the night away.

INTO THE FUTURE

Although the carefree flapper is an enduring image, it's important not to overstate the freedom women experienced in the 1920s. Though they might paint the town red, they were still expected to ultimately find a husband and settle down. When they did, few would be able to hold onto their jobs. Likewise, sexual freedom only went so far. Just as in generations past, women were still judged on their reputations. So, while a flapper was out having a whale of a time, she always had to be mindful of who was watching and the gossip that might spread. Women were certainly more free than they had been, but they were still restricted far more than the popular image of the fabulous flapper might suggest. Of course, not all women experienced these freedoms and some didn't want to. But for the flapper about town, the world was there for the taking, and the watchwords were modernity, freedom and fun. As their older female relatives looked on in a mixture of dismay and – most likely – envy, they were stepping out into a new tomorrow. Women were on the rise.



Trousers offered women a new freedom, with their lives no longer hampered by petticoats and foundations

STEPPING OUT OF SKIRTS

FOR THE TRUE ADVENTURESS, TROUSERS SAID IT ALL...

Fashion is a language of its own and flappers understood it instinctively. Though the thought of trousers being scandalous might raise a smile now, for the most adventurous 1920s woman, they sent a message all of their own. Though far from a wardrobe staple, women who truly challenged convention stepped out in style. For these adventurous gals it wasn't just about fashion, but freedom too: only a few years after layers of petticoats and stays reigned supreme, women were striding out in trousers.

THE FASHION REVOLUTION

AS THE WORLD BREATHED AGAIN AFTER WAR, FASHION WAS UNDERGOING ITS OWN REVOLUTION AS IT STEPPED OUT INTO THE JAZZ AGE – HEMLINES ROSE AND STAYS WERE THROWN ASIDE, WITH BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS READY TO EMBRACE FREEDOM IN THE FASHION-FORWARD ROARING TWENTIES...

WORDS: **CATHERINE CURZON**

In the decades before World War I, the fashionable female silhouette was an unmistakable creation of impressive textile engineering. With narrow waists, long skirts and bosoms held in place by corsetry, women were shaped not by nature, but by strong foundation garments and structured clothing that didn't accentuate a woman's physique, but rather created and exaggerated the illusion of it, nipping in here and bringing out there. Often uncomfortable, completely impractical for women who wanted to do anything beyond the most simple tasks, and restrictive in many day-to-day activities, it was out of touch with the new world. Young women, caught up in the glamour and excitement of the dawning Jazz Age, rejected the concealing and confining layers that had been worn by their mothers and grandmothers in favour of something that screamed modernity.

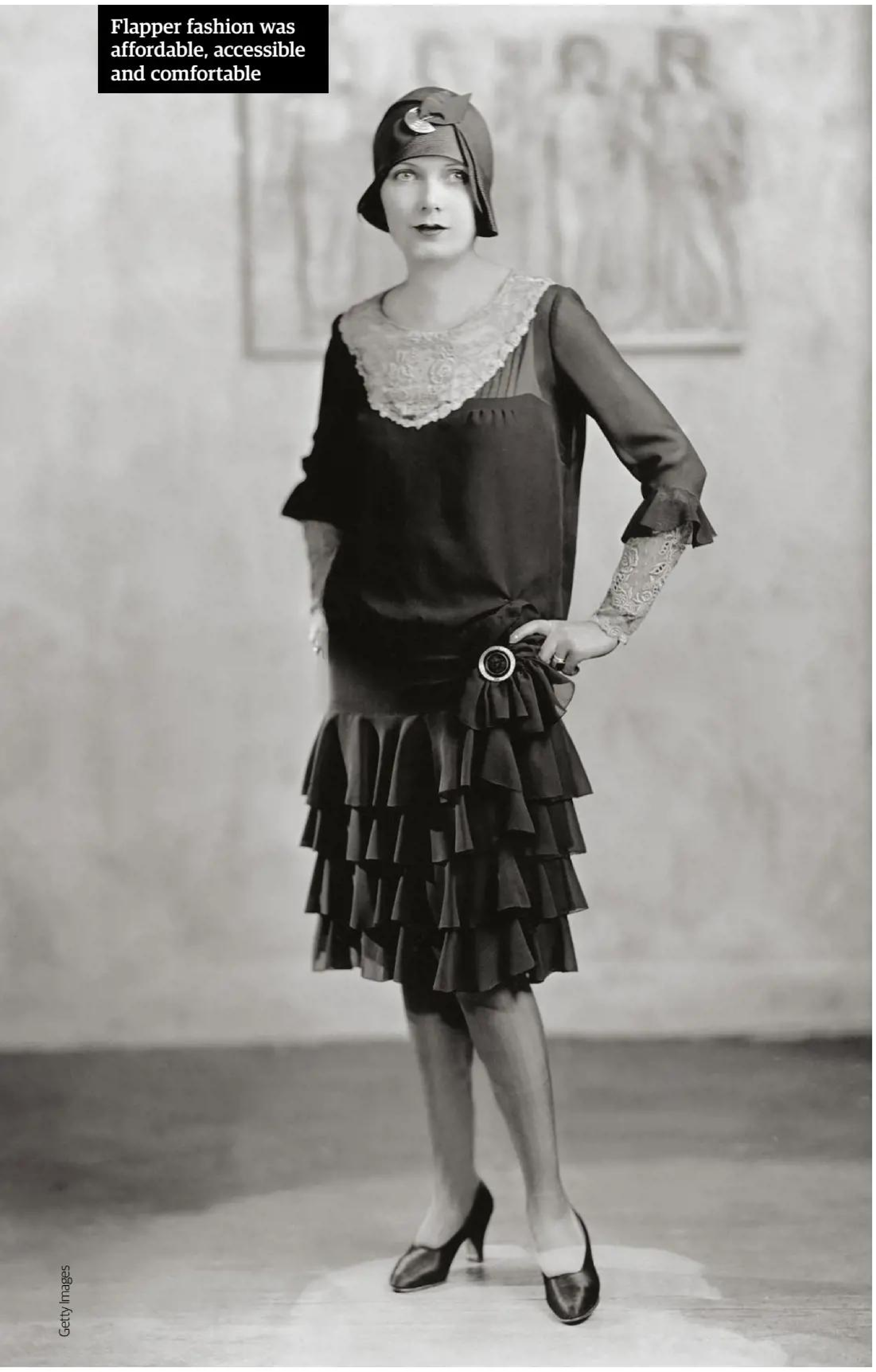
FLAPPER FASHION

Flapper fashion couldn't be more different from that of the generation that had gone before. Hemlines retreated from the ankle to the knee or, for the most fashionably daring, even above the knee. Those who considered themselves a little more demure still thought nothing of stepping out in dresses that flashed their hitherto concealed shins, now showcased by silky stockings. The accentuated silhouette that relied on petticoats and foundation garments was reshaped by upcoming design houses, who wanted to answer the call for a fresh simplicity with their own statement pieces.

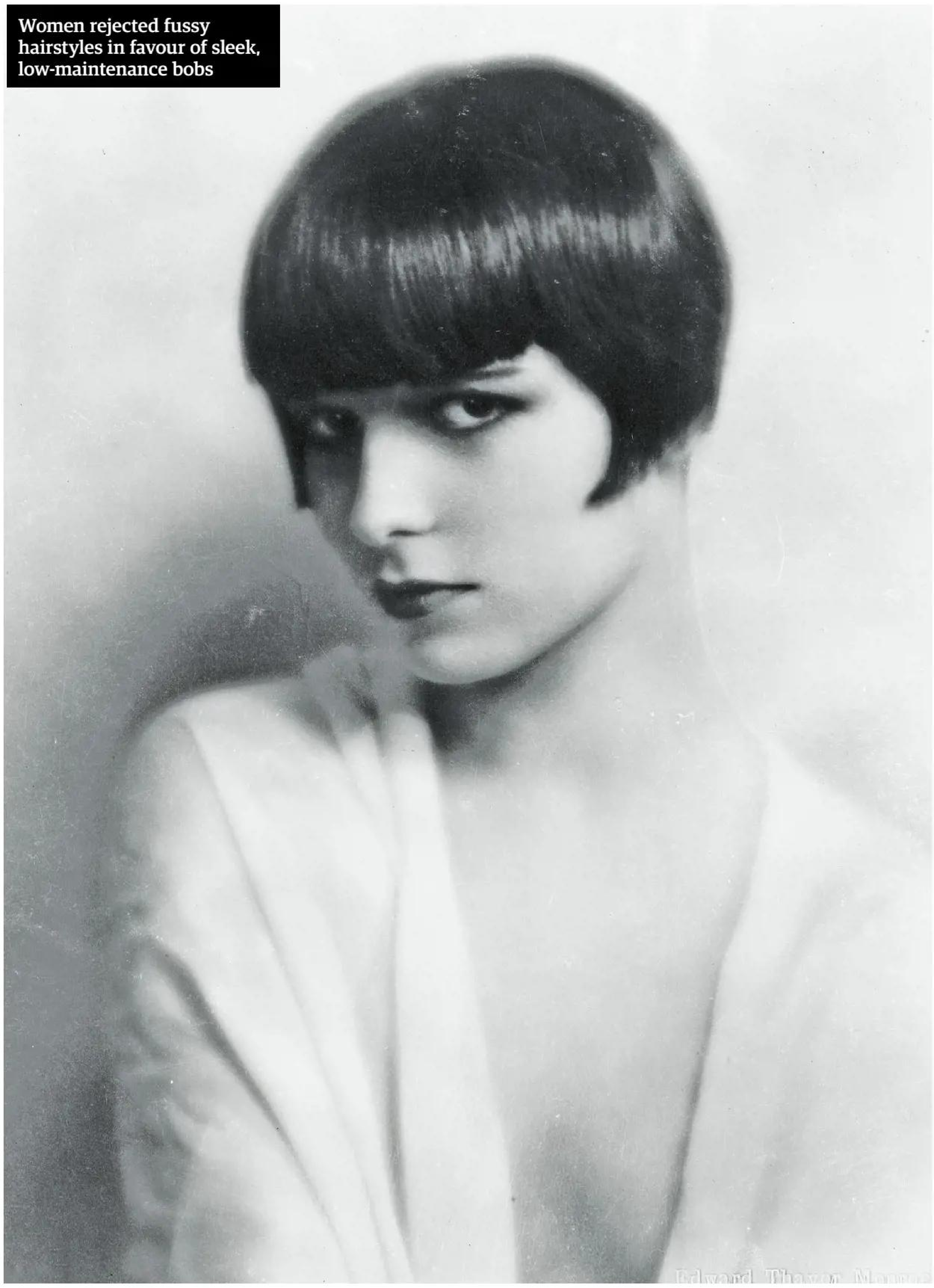
In the 1920s, waists dropped lower and long, straight lines replaced curves and swerves. The 'la garçonne' look popularised by pioneers like Coco Chanel has become famous as the typical flapper dress, dropping in a boxy, straight shape from the shoulders to the knees. This style of dress offered its wearer a more androgynous body shape and revelled in simplicity rather than fussy opulence. When a fashionable woman wanted to dress up her look, she did so not with crinolines, bustles or layers and layers of gown, but with dazzling jewels and beads or glittering embroidery and sequins. The shapes were still simple, but feathers or bright ornamentation offered a shimmering evening pizazz.

For women on a limited budget, the new looks on offer opened up a whole world of possibility. With fashionable dresses no longer needing excessive yards of fabric and flapper looks easy to create with simple and affordable textiles, what had once been the purview of the rich now came within the grasp of the majority of women. Even jewellery became less extravagant; instead, a few statement pieces were encouraged and these could be as simple and sleek as the dresses they were intended to complement.

After centuries of wigs and ornamental hairstyles, flappers rejected anything that required hours spent in the hairdresser's chair. Their newly active lifestyles couldn't be compromised by hairdos that meant a girl couldn't move her head to the Charleston, and fussy hairdos were swept away along with the fussy clothes that had so recently been the fashion. Instead, women cut their hair into blunt, sleek bobs so they could wash and go, confident their look would survive all day and night. It was unlike anything that had been seen before and became an enduring symbol of the Jazz Age.



Flapper fashion was affordable, accessible and comfortable

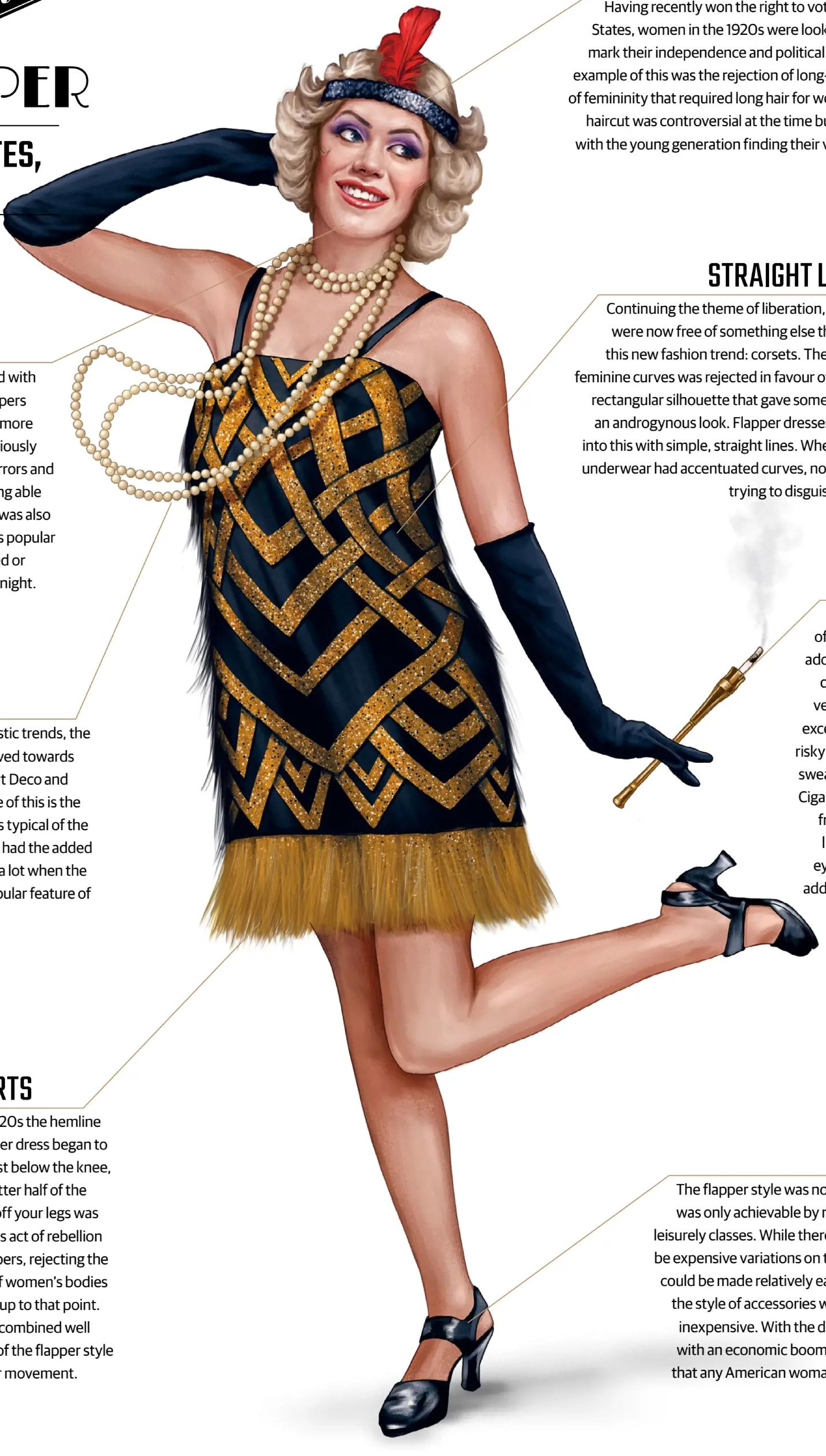


Women rejected fussy hairstyles in favour of sleek, low-maintenance bobs

Getty images

THE Anatomy of A FLAPPER

UNITED STATES, 1920S



BOBBED HAIRCUT

Having recently won the right to vote in the United States, women in the 1920s were looking for ways to mark their independence and political liberty. A good example of this was the rejection of long-standing ideas of femininity that required long hair for women. The bob haircut was controversial at the time but a massive hit with the young generation finding their voice and style.

STRAIGHT LINES

Continuing the theme of liberation, women were now free of something else thanks to this new fashion trend: corsets. The ideal of feminine curves was rejected in favour of a more rectangular silhouette that gave something of an androgynous look. Flapper dresses played into this with simple, straight lines. Where once underwear had accentuated curves, now it was trying to disguise them.

MAKEUP

Advances in cosmetics combined with a desire for bold looks led to flappers wearing a lot more makeup, and more colourful makeup, than had previously been the case. With compact mirrors and metal containers for lipstick, being able to reapply makeup on the move was also easier. This made elaborate looks popular because they could be easily fixed or reapplied throughout the day or night.

SMOKING

Part of the sexual liberation of women in this era included adopting behaviours that were deemed masculine, or at the very least 'unladylike', such as excessive drinking (all the more risky in the midst of Prohibition), swearing and smoking in public. Cigarette holders kept ash away from your dress and smoke a little further away from your eyes or hat. They also had the added benefit of drawing more attention to the act.

JEWELLERY

Inspired by minimalist artistic trends, the jewellery of the 1920s moved towards designs that were more Art Deco and simplistic. A great example of this is the iconic long-bead necklaces typical of the classic flapper look. These had the added benefit of moving around a lot when the flapper was dancing, a popular feature of their clothing, too.

SHORT SKIRTS

Throughout the 1920s the hemline of the typical flapper dress began to rise, reaching to just below the knee, or higher, by the latter half of the decade. Showing off your legs was another scandalous act of rebellion on the part of flappers, rejecting the repressive views of women's bodies that had prevailed up to that point. Shorter skirts also combined well with the looser fit of the flapper style to allow for greater movement.

ECONOMY

The flapper style was not something that was only achievable by rich elites and the leisurely classes. While there could definitely be expensive variations on the style, dresses could be made relatively easily at home and the style of accessories was also relatively inexpensive. With the decade kicking off with an economic boom, this was a trend that any American woman could emulate.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

54 floors above Manhattan, 'Shipwreck' Kelly enjoys coffee and a snack, while doing a headstand!

Getty Images

FADS OF THE 20S

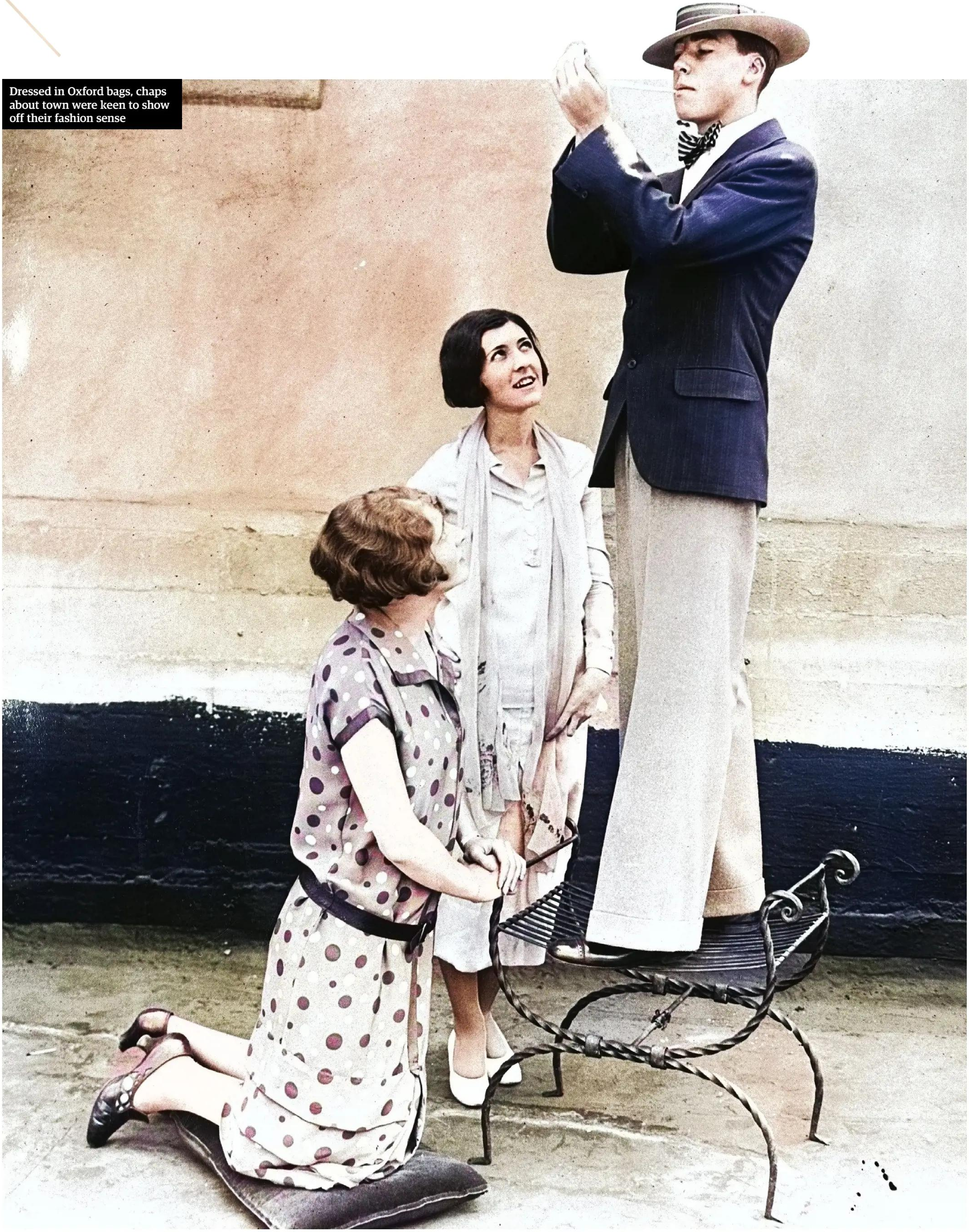
FROM FLAGPOLE SITTING TO MARATHON DANCING, THE 1920S HAD SOME OF THE STRANGEST FADS AROUND!

In 1927, Alvin 'Shipwreck' Kelly climbed a flagpole in Newark, New Jersey, and sat atop it for 12 days. It was just the latest stunt in a career that had begun in 1924, when ex-seaman Kelly clambered up a flagpole to answer a dare for a friend, a feat that was to change his life. Tales of his escapades caught the imagination of the public and suddenly, Americans couldn't get enough of sitting on flagpoles. Kelly turned his pastime into a career, even undertaking a tour of the USA to sit on poles in more than two dozen cities. He broke records and drew enormous crowds, even sitting on a pole on a biplane above New York. So celebrated was Kelly that flagpole sitters sprang up all over the country, some even performing under 'Shipwreck' Kelly's name and stealing his business.

For those who had no head for heights, the 1920s offered other fads, too. If you preferred a more restful activity, Mahjong was an ideal option. Brought to America in 1922, the Chinese game enjoyed huge popularity across the US, where enthusiasts turned a Mahjong session into a social occasion. Confusingly clad in kimonos rather than Chinese clothes, they gathered together to hold Mahjong parties that could stretch for hours, revelling in what they thought was a taste of the East. In fact, importer Joseph Babcock had simplified the rules tremendously, not convinced his customers would be able to understand the authentic rules of the game!

Of course, in an era when dance was the centre of so many social experiences, it's hardly surprising to find it had a fad of its own. In 1923, England's Alma Cummings danced for 27 hours without taking a break. She exhausted half a dozen partners and launched a sensation. Dance marathons became a gruelling endurance test, sometimes going on for days and leaving their participants physical wrecks. The fad reached its culmination at Madison Square Garden with the Dance Derby of the Century in 1928, where couples danced for the chance to win a $5,000 prize. After nearly two weeks, New York's health officials closed the event down. By some miracle, eight couples remained in competition. They split the prize between them, no doubt glad to finally take off their dancing shoes.

Dressed in Oxford bags, chaps about town were keen to show off their fashion sense



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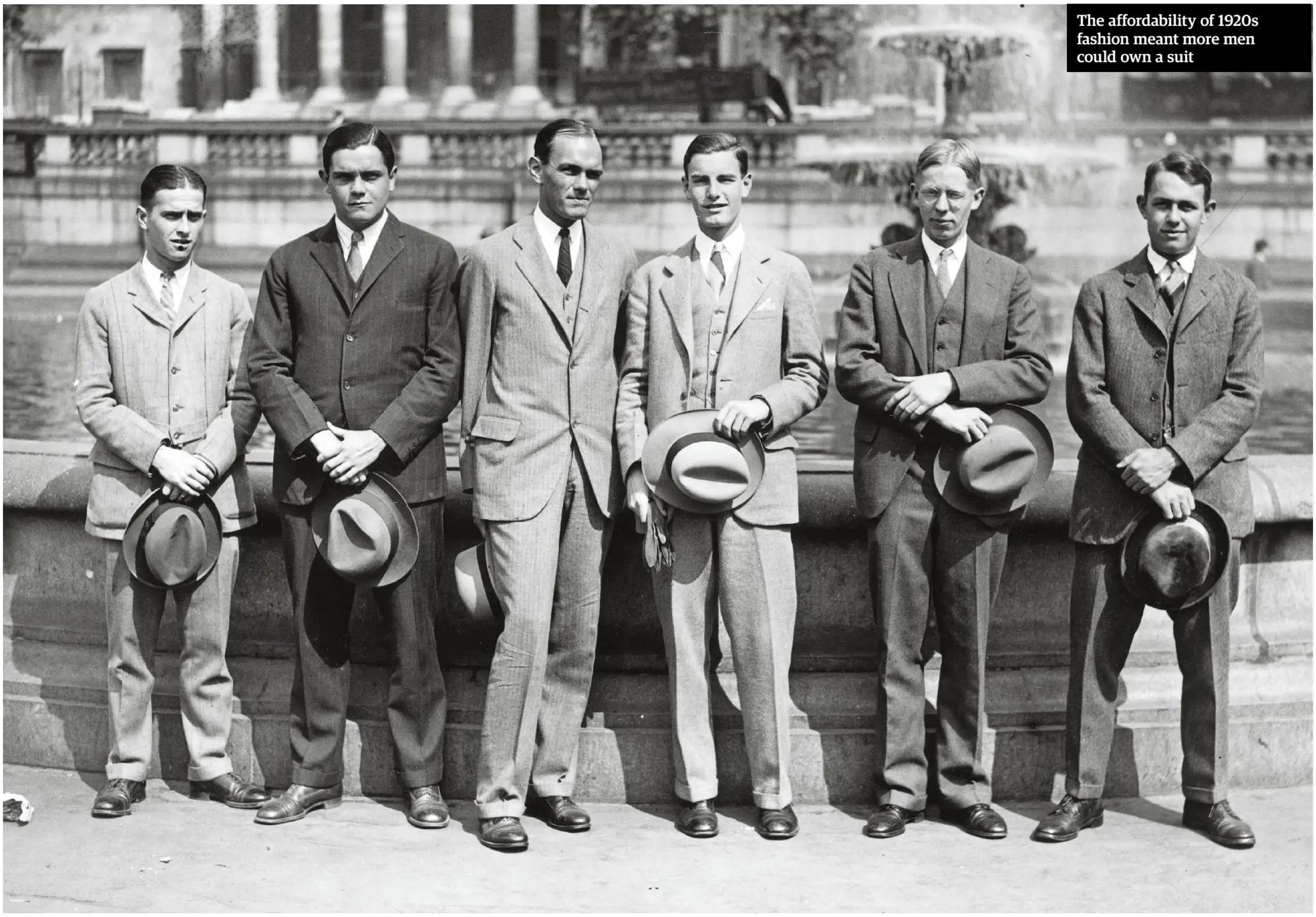


The affordability of 1920s fashion meant more men could own a suit

Both male and female clothes of the 1920s were looser and more comfortable

Getty Images

MEN ABOUT TOWN

For men, the fashion of the 1920s wasn't a dramatic change but it was no less welcome. Returning from the war, men who had existed in uniform wanted to show off their individuality once they were back. The slim, identical suits of generations past would no longer do.

In the 1920s, self-expression was encouraged when it came to male fashion. While slim fits could show off a sophisticated man's natural physique, not everyone wanted to be tailored to sleek perfection. Some men preferred wide-leg Oxford Bags or plus fours when it came to trousers, while others embraced tweeds or pinstripes. Just as women wanted to express their individual personality through dress, clothing likewise offered a man the chance to show the world who he was. Aiming to mimic the looks popularised by movie stars, men turned to a masculine silhouette, set off with starched white shirts and colourful cravats and bow ties.

In the 1920s, even footwear and outerwear became an expression of a man's character and social standing. For many, spectator shoes in black and white are symbolic of the decade, while for the real young male fashionista, nothing captured the 1920s like a raccoon coat. This fashion fad was hugely popular among male college students, who threw on long coats made of racoon pelts and, accessorised with a pair of spectators and perhaps a straw boater, motored in their open-top cars from party to party. It was a look indelibly associated with youthful enthusiasm for life.

Getty Images

THE DEMOCRACY OF FASHION

In the 1920s, fashion became affordable for many who had previously found an up-to-date wardrobe to be beyond their means. Industrial production processes and less reliance on elaborate gowns and acres of fabric or underpinnings, meant that women could recreate fashionable styles from the most simple dresses. In addition, while exclusive design houses were setting trends for the wealthy, these trends were being copied and sold in huge numbers by department stores. Although only a few could afford a Chanel original, many more could afford the mass-market version. The fabrics used might not be so luxurious, but nobody would know that at a glance.

The same could be said for male clothes, too. With the boom in industry and manufacturing, tailored suits were no longer the exclusive preserve of the wealthy. Now a man with a far more humble bank balance could still enjoy tailoring that would give him Bertie Wooster's plus fours or Gatsby's sharp suits.

Even those who lived outside metropolitan centres could experience the new fashion frontiers. Department stores issued catalogues that were distributed across the US, offering even those in the most far-flung corners of the country the opportunity to buy fashionable clothing. For the first time in history, the contents of the richest wardrobes – or at least, an affordable version of them – was within the grasp of the working man and woman.

The revolution in fashion that occurred in the 1920s was truly groundbreaking. It wasn't just a development of what had gone before, but an entirely new and fresh approach. Things would never be the same again.

> "Although only a few could afford a Chanel original, many more could afford the mass-market version"

THE HOUSE OF CHANEL

PERHAPS MORE SO THAN ANY OF HER CONTEMPORARIES, COCO CHANEL CAME TO DEFINE AN ERA

Born into poverty in 1883, Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel opened her first shop in Paris in 1910 and never looked back. Chanel rejected everything that had gone before, pushing aside the elaborate and restricting gowns that typified the fashion of earlier generations and instead offered modern women a wardrobe that would reflect their active and fashionable lifestyles.

Specialising in looks that captured the comfort of leisure and sportswear, while being suitable for all sorts of occasions, Chanel soon had a dedicated clientele. She began her career working with jersey, a fabric usually reserved for men's underwear, revelling in its versatility and affordability when she was just getting started. Even when she hit the big time, Chanel continued to use jersey in her pieces, as it was perfectly suited to her simple, practical designs. For the mass-market producers and department stores who were producing clothes for the woman in the street, it meant that Chanel's trendsetting looks could be recreated for less wealthy customers to enjoy, too.

Chanel's boxy shapes and straight lines became not only her hallmark, but that of a whole era. Her design house on 31 Rue Cambon, where it remains today, became a place of pilgrimage for fashionistas worldwide.

But Chanel wasn't alone. As women grew hungry for new looks, design houses sprung up to serve them. While traditional and established houses such as Worth scrambled to reflect the new fashions, emerging names such as Elsa Schiaparelli, Jeanne Lanvin and Norman Hartnell – later Queen Elizabeth II's favourite designer – were not only snapping at their heels, but surpassing them. Many of the design houses that emerged in the roaring 20s remain iconic and popular brands today. It is a testament to the influence of the Jazz Age, when fashion changed the world.

Coco Chanel (pictured) and her creations came to define the look of the era

Getty Images

At picture palaces like Grauman's Chinese Theatre, a night at the movies was a journey into a world of luxury

Alamy

THE MEDIA GOES GLOBAL

N THE 1920S, CELEBRITY CULTURE BEGAN TO SPREAD ACROSS THE GLOBE. FROM HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTARS TO SPORTING LEGENDS AND MUSIC ICONS, THE PROLIFERATION OF MASS MEDIA SAW AN UNPRECEDENTED BOOM IN POP CULTURE

Today, it's difficult to imagine that there was a time before cinema or radio and before celebrity and pop culture fascinated the globe. But just over a century ago, technological limitations meant exactly that. In the wake of World War I, however, advancements in technology changed all of that and in America, a new prosperity saw leisure pursuits enter the big time.

CELEBRITY GOES GLOBAL

As the twenties roared, the new art of cinema was moving fast. Movies poured from studios and with low ticket prices, a cinema trip was an affordable way to spend a few hours. This wasn't a casual pastime either, as going to the pictures was a real event. People dressed up in their best clothes to attend a screening and for those in big cities, they could attend glamorous movie palaces, sometimes styled after exotic locations and as showy as the films themselves.

With cinema a regular pastime for so many, the stars were soon becoming as popular as the movies they appeared in. Performers like Clara Bow, Charlie Chaplin and Al Jolson, who enjoys the distinction of being the star of *The Jazz Singer*, the first "talkie", became globally recognised faces. Whilst some would see their careers ended by the coming of sound, for those who could cling on from silents to talkies, the pickings were rich and the rewards unparalleled.

Yet it wasn't only screen stars who flourished. In the Jazz Age, musicians made the most of the popularity of radio to get their names and voices out. Many households had a wireless and radio stations were opening at a rate of knots, which meant that a popular musician could be in every single home at any hour of the day or night. Prior to the proliferation of radio, musicians had to rely on selling sheet music to those fans who had an interest in their work, technology offered new opportunities.

Although it didn't rival the radio in sheer numbers, the phonograph played a vital part in the flourishing Jazz Age too. As record players became a staple in an increasing number of homes, sales of pianos and sheet music plummeted and recorded music became the only way to listen to your favourites. Jazz and blues artists reached unprecedented numbers of listeners as artists saw their fan base swell beyond their wildest dreams. Even sports made the most of these new developments, as games could be broadcast on the radio for the first time with play-by-play commentary. Fans who couldn't get to the game could listen to it in real time and it became a social occasion in itself, making stars of sporting heroes whose exploits could now be enjoyed all over the country. No longer restricted to reading a write up in the sports pages, following the team took on a whole new dimension when you could do it as it happened, even from the other side of the nation.

For the first time, the real juggernaut strength of mass broadcast media was becoming impossible to ignore. With it came the first generation of what we would today recognise as global celebrity culture. Little wonder that it took the world by storm.

EMBASSY
JOHN GILBE
GRETA GARBO IN LOV
BEAUTY SHOP
JOHN GILBERT & GRETA GARBO in LOVE
TWIC
2.45
2⁴⁵ TWICE DA
ALL SEATS RESE
Box Office Inside Open f
3 Performances Sundays & Holidays

Going to the cinema in the 1920s was a real event; people flocked to the movies several times every month

Getty Images

EMBASSY
JOHN GILBERT
GRETA GARBO IN LOVE
RT
VE
TOM'S
CABIN
RAL THEATRE
NOW
AILY 8.45
RVED
om 10 A.M.
3-6-8.45 P.M.

INTO THE HOME

It will come as no surprise that advertisers rapidly got wise to the possibilities of cinema and radio too. No longer reliant on print advertising, in America commercials were soon sounding merrily from wireless sets into unsuspecting homes. These advertisers both caught and shaped the national mood, associating products with stars of screen, music and sport, in endorsement deals that saw fans flocking to smoke the same brand, use the same cosmetics or eat the same snacks as their idol.

Once advertisers had been reliant on print media, but not anymore. As Hollywood shaped the style of the world, so too did shrewd advertisers reach out to that same audience through cinema screens and radio. Now one didn't have to actively read an advertisement to be exposed to its message, because it was happening almost accidentally. After all, though some readers would turn the page to avoid the ads, few would get up and turn off the wireless to dodge the commercials aired between popular songs.

Across America, sports fans could listen to live play-by-play coverage of major sporting events all over the country for the very first time

SCANDAL

Of course, whilst icons make the big money, anyone on a pedestal can be knocked off it. And when they were, the press was waiting to get the story out to as wide an audience as possible. Though the rewards of celebrity were huge, they could be snatched away in an instant. Press barons such as William Randolph Hearst used their power to bring down their enemies and sell their favourites, stoking scandal and making sure everyone got to read about it.

Hollywood's first famous scandal came in 1920 when Olive Thomas, famed as the embodiment of the modern gal in The Flapper, took her own life. Her death shocked an adoring public, but it paled into insignificance next to the still notorious scandal that engulfed Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle. Beloved for his comedy and his rotund figure, in 1921 Arbuckle attended a party in San Francisco at which an aspiring actress named Virginia Rappe was found seriously ill. When she admitted to hospital, one of her friends told a doctor that Arbuckle had raped Rappe and that her injuries had been caused by the assault and the crushing impact of his massive weight. Virginia Rappe died on 9 September 1921 of peritonitis caused by a ruptured bladder.

Arbuckle protested his innocence and though medical examinations found no evidence of any assault, the actor was charged with manslaughter and rape. The press coverage of the trial was constant and merciless: Hearst was making millions from newspaper sales and made sure that Arbuckle's trial was splashed across the front page whenever possible. After three heavily publicised trials, Fatty Arbuckle was not only exonerated but received a written apology from the jury, who unanimously felt that he had been done a great wrong. Despite that, the vicious coverage of Arbuckle's trial and the overwhelming public distaste at such Hollywood excess had done permanent damage. Despite his exoneration, Fatty Arbuckle's Hollywood dream was over.

Ironically, Hearst himself was embroiled in a scandal in 1924 when a passenger aboard his yacht, Thomas Ince, was taken seriously ill and died soon afterwards. Rumour had it that Hearst had suspected Charlie Chaplin of pursuing Hearst's mistress, Marion Davies, and had shot Ince by accident whilst aiming at Chaplin. Needless to say, Hearst's newspapers didn't cover that particular scandal.

In the age of the mass media, even movie stars weren't immune from the pull of the radio. Here, Oliver Hardy, Stan Laurel, Jimmy Durante, and Buster Keaton listen intently to the exciting broadcast of a bridge game!

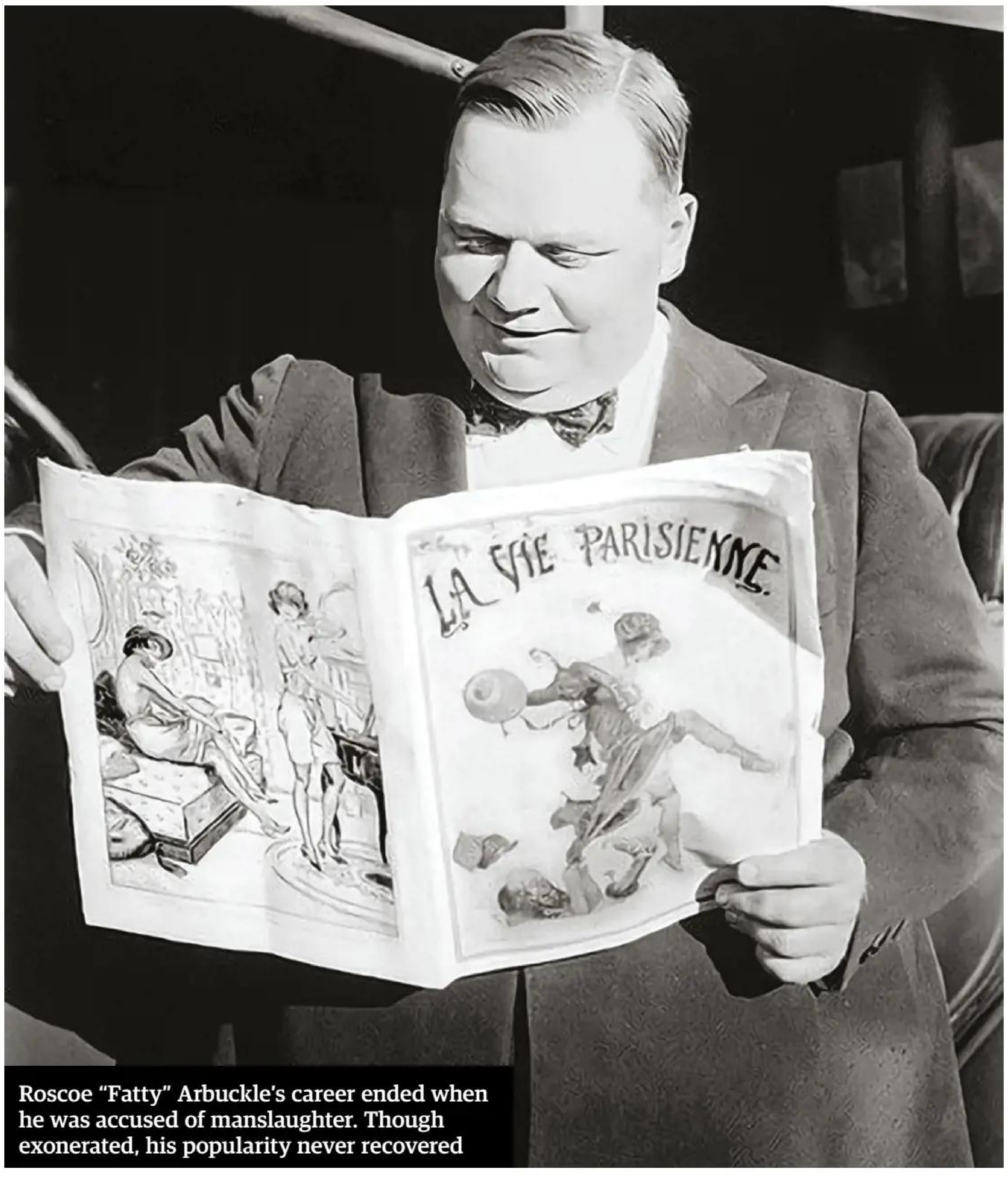
Getty Images

THE KING OF HEARST CASTLE

IN JAZZ AGE AMERICA, FEW MEN WIELDED MORE POWER THAN WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST

William Randolph Hearst was the merciless press baron who made his fortune thanks to what became known as "yellow journalism", relying on sensationalism, scandal and sometimes outright lies to sell peppers. Though he never achieved his dream of becoming president, Hearst became a multimillionaire, living in a castle overlooking the Pacific Ocean with his lover, actress Marion Davies. Hearst was the inspiration for Orson Welles' Citizen Kane, a film that he tried in vain to bury completely. Though it is a classic today, the press magnate succeeded in pressuring cinemas to limit screenings, fatally damaging its box office chances. The king of Hearst Castle, it seemed, was unassailable. Yet Hearst had reckoned without one thing: economic collapse. The financial crash almost ruined William Randolph Hearst and ended forever his dominance of American media. Barely dodging bankruptcy, the man who had weaponised his front pages to destroy his opponents found few who were willing to offer a helping hand. He escaped utter ruin only when Marion Davies sold her own possessions and wrote him a cheque for one million dollars – the very amount he needed to save himself from total ruin. It was a humbling lesson for he man who had once had everything.

Newspaper owner William Randolph Hearst could make or break careers – and he was happy to do so



Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle's career ended when he was accused of manslaughter. Though exonerated, his popularity never recovered

Marion Davies became famous as the mistress of press baron William Randolph Hearst, the man she eventually saved from bankruptcy

ICONS OF THE ROARING TWENTIES

IN THE 1920S, MASS MEDIA MEANT THAT CELEBRITY REIGNED SUPREME; FOR THE FIRST TIME, ICONS COULD TRULY GO GLOBAL

WORDS: **CATHERINE CURZON**

From sport to music to cinema, in the 1920s the public were hungry for entertainment and, in a new world of mass media, celebrity mania gripped the popular imagination. Millions could be made by those who commanded icon status, but it wasn't always a case of happily ever after…

As the 'It Girl', Clara Bow was the personification of the 1920s flapper. Bubbly, accomplished and relatable, she was box-office gold

CLARA BOW

BORN • 1905

FAMOUS FOR • BEING THE 'IT GIRL'

The star of more than 50 movies across the silent and sound eras, Clara Bow became famous as the 'It Girl' – the very essence of the Roaring Twenties. At her height she was the most popular woman in film, topping the box office, year after year. Her fans mimicked her look and style, desperate to capture Bow's carefree spirit. Yet despite her public persona as the woman who had it all, Bow battled personal demons and retired young, quitting the movies forever in 1933.

Chaplin was one of the first auteurs, with control over every aspect of his work

CHARLIE CHAPLIN

BORN • 1889

FAMOUS FOR • MOVIEMAKING

Few characters are as instantly recognisable as 'the tramp', Charlie Chaplin's celebrated comic creation. Chaplin was born into poverty in London, but went on to become the king of Hollywood. His career spanned the silent and sound eras and he wrote, directed, edited and starred in most of his projects, as well as composing the soundtracks; he even founded his own studio and co-founded United Artists, giving him complete creative control over his output. Chaplin's career declined when he was accused of communist sympathies, but today he is regarded as a legend of early cinema.

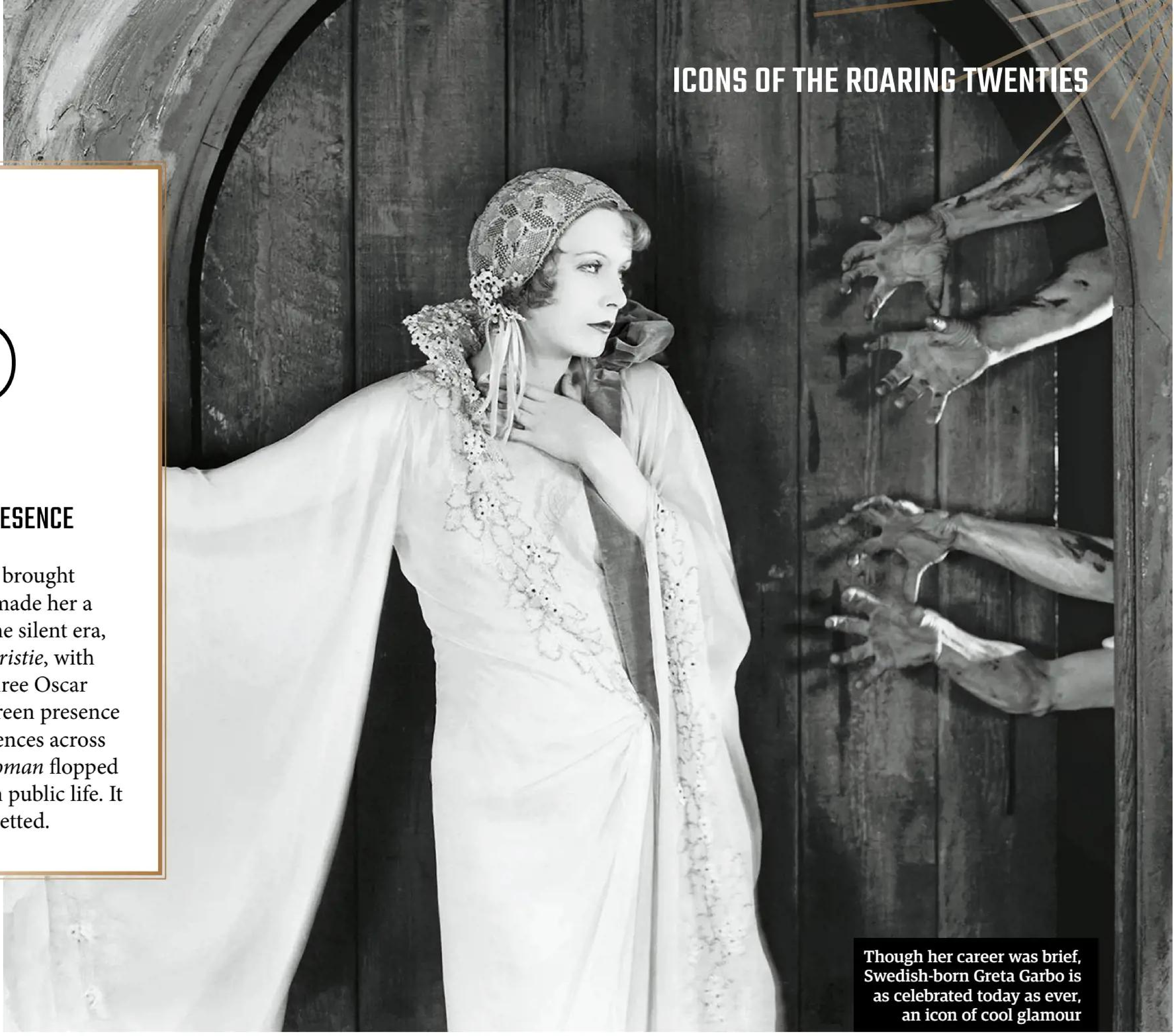
Getty Images

GRETA GARBO

BORN • 1905

FAMOUS FOR • HER SCREEN PRESENCE

Born in Sweden, Greta Garbo was brought to the US by Louis B Mayer, who made her a star at MGM. After her debut in the silent era, she entered the talkies in *Anna Christie*, with the tagline “Garbo Talks!”. With three Oscar nominations, Garbo’s magnetic screen presence captured the imaginations of audiences across the world but when *Two-Faced Woman* flopped in 1941, Garbo turned her back on public life. It was a decision she never once regretted.



Though her career was brief, Swedish-born Greta Garbo is as celebrated today as ever, an icon of cool glamour

For fans of baseball, ‘Babe’ Ruth was the man who could do it all. Few could match this king of the baseball diamond

BABE RUTH

BORN • 1895

FAMOUS FOR • HOME RUNS

George ‘Babe’ Ruth became a baseball legend as an outfielder for the New York Yankees. He made his debut as a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox in 1914 and was soon a fan favourite, before joining the Yankees in 1920. Ruth went on to spend 15 years with the New York team, breaking records and winning legions of fans with his slugging style. Ruth was one of the inaugural inductees into the Baseball Hall of Fame and to this day, is regarded as one of the true greats of the all-American sport.

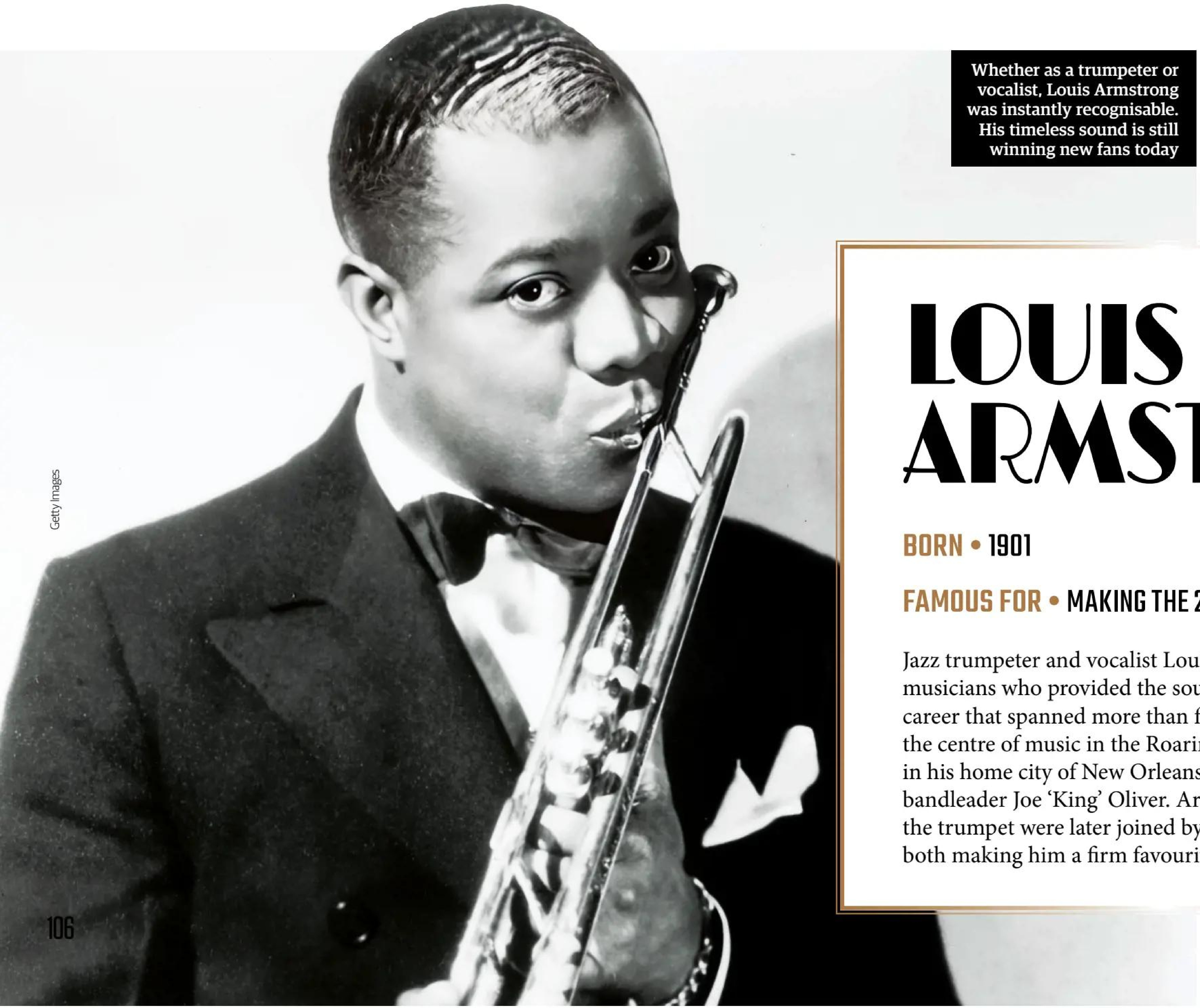
RUDOLPH VALENTINO

BORN • 1895

FAMOUS FOR • HIS SMOULDER

In the 1920s, no movie star commanded more adoration than Rudolph Valentino. Sold to fans as 'the Latin lover', his good looks and smouldering presence made him one of the very first global sex symbols and audiences flocked to films like *The Sheik*, in which he romanced his leading ladies in true 1920s style. Valentino's death at the age of just 31 led to scenes of mass hysteria – 100,000 people turned out for his funeral and riots broke out at the funeral home among fans frantic to view his body.

In films such as *The Sheik*, Rudolph Valentino left legions of fans across the world swooning with his smouldering good looks



Whether as a trumpeter or vocalist, Louis Armstrong was instantly recognisable. His timeless sound is still winning new fans today

Getty Images

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

BORN • 1901

FAMOUS FOR • MAKING THE 20s SWING

Jazz trumpeter and vocalist Louis Armstrong was one of the musicians who provided the soundtrack to the Jazz Age. In a career that spanned more than five decades, Armstrong was at the centre of music in the Roaring Twenties, starting his career in his home city of New Orleans before moving to Chicago with bandleader Joe 'King' Oliver. Armstrong's legendary skills with the trumpet were later joined by his distinctive singing voice, both making him a firm favourite among music fans to this day.

Anna May Wong had to battle typecasting and rejection in her movie career, despite her stardom and fashion icon status

ANNA MAY WONG

BORN • 1905

FAMOUS FOR • REFUSING TO BE TYPECAST

Born Wong Liu Tsong, Anna May Wong became the first Chinese-American star in Hollywood, as popular for her performances as her high fashion wardrobe. Hobbled by typecasting, Wong lost out on a rare Chinese lead role to a Caucasian actress and took a leave of absence to tour China and escape Hollywood. Though she returned to her career, she was unable to fully recapture her earlier stardom. However, Wong did eventually break new ground in the 1950s, as the first-ever Asian-American lead in a US television series, *The Gallery of Madame Liu-Tsong*.

Alamy

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

HOW A JAZZ AGE MEGA-STAR PUT RACISM UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

WORDS: **JESSICA LEGGETT**

Josephine Baker was a woman unlike any other. A trailblazer for Black Americans, her name is synonymous with the Jazz Age that swept through the Roaring Twenties. As one of the best entertainers in Paris, she dazzled and captivated audiences with her stage performances at a time when African and European cultures merged to define an era of frivolity and razzmatazz, turning Josephine into a world-renowned star.

This stardom was in stark contrast to Josephine's humble beginnings, which would fuel her crusade against racism later on in life. Born to stage performers in St Louis, Missouri, on 3 June 1906, Freda Josephine McDonald was thrown into a world of poverty, racism and discrimination. Living off meagre scraps of food, she found work as a waitress and as a live-in cleaner for white families – one of her mistresses would beat her regularly and made her sleep in the basement.

By 1921, 15-year-old Josephine had dropped out of school and married twice, earning money by dancing steps that she had learnt in America's urban black centres. Later in life, Josephine would reflect on her childhood and confess, "I danced to keep warm". She would soon leave her second husband, William Howard Baker, and run away to join a black vaudeville troupe after being scouted for her dancing. Although they had separated, Josephine chose to keep William's surname 'Baker' for professional purposes.

Moving to New York City, Josephine attracted attention during the Harlem Renaissance, considered the rebirth of Black-American arts. Initially rejected from the chorus lines for being "too skinny and too dark", a determined Josephine learnt the routines anyway, just in case another dancer fell ill. When the opportunity came, she joined the chorus lines and stole the shows with her comedic performances, which made her stand out from the rest of the performers.

Wearing caricatured blackface, she appeared in the chorus lines for the Broadway productions *Shuffle Along* and *The Chocolate Dandies* in 1921 and 1924 respectively. Catching the eye of a recruiter for an all-black dance troupe in France, Josephine left for Europe with an offer of $1,000 a month to join the Parisian stage, leaving America and its discrimination behind.

Arriving in the City of Lights in 1925, 19-year-old Josephine discovered what it was like to live in an unsegregated society for the first time in her life. She would also eventually meet other African-descended women celebrated for their erotic dances, a stark difference to the racial prejudice and discrimination that she had experienced while living in America.

Josephine's big break came when she debuted in La Revue Nègre at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on 2 October 1925. Her seductive and funny dance moves entranced audiences who kept coming back for more, even after Josephine had moved to perform at the Folies Bergère. However, she cemented her celebrity status for good in 1926 when she first performed the Danse Sauvage, wearing a big pearl necklace and her iconic skirt made from a string of artificial bananas, and not much else.

The Danse Sauvage was the epitome of unbridled sexuality, resonating with the sexual freedom of the Jazz Age. It was set in the African jungle and Josephine never shied away from her African heritage, instead choosing to firmly embrace it by bringing traditional Black dances such as the Charleston and the Black Bottom to Paris and incorporating African themes into her performances. Audiences loved Josephine's work because they saw it as indulging the stereotype that black people were primitive, exotic and foolish.

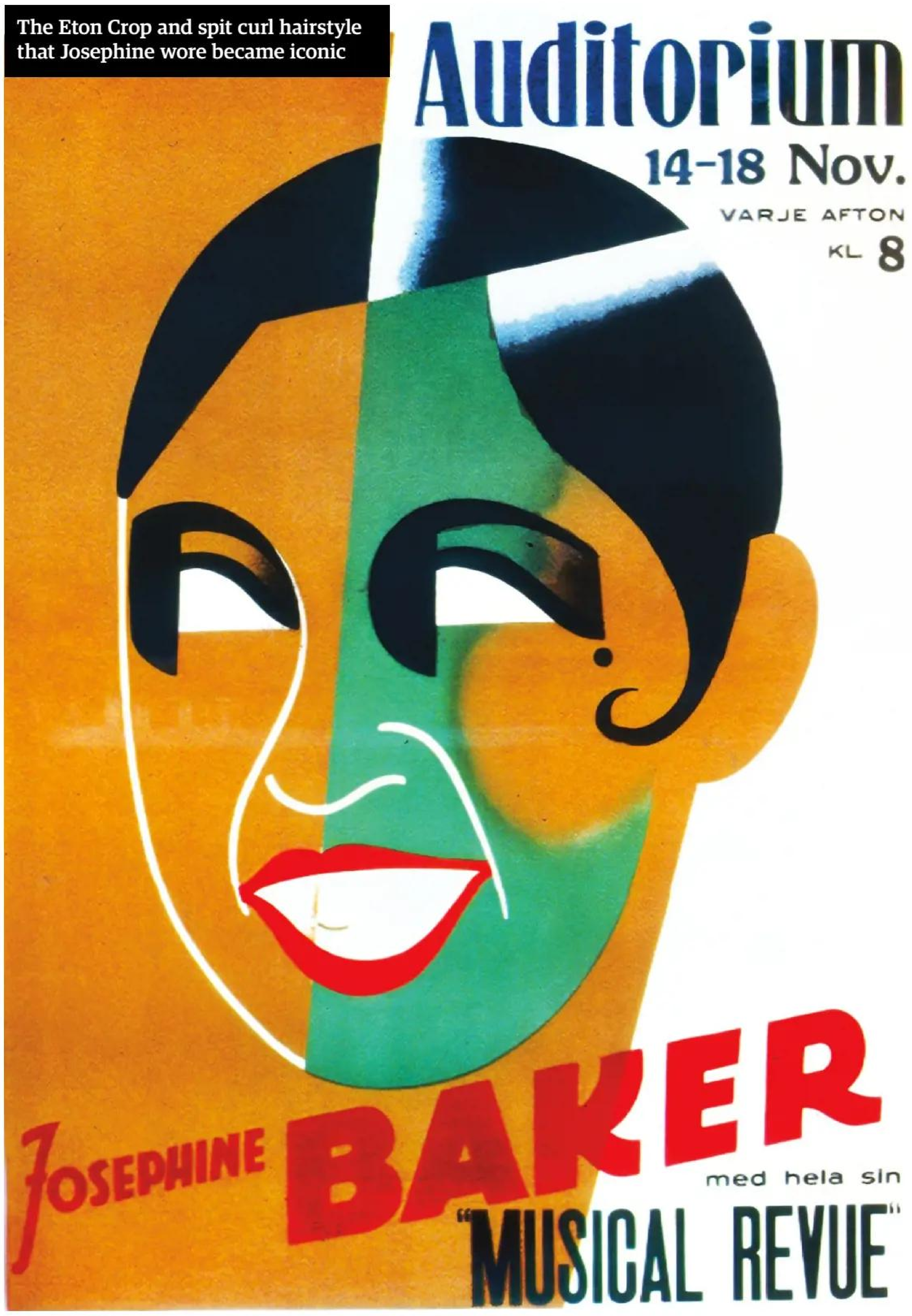
Josephine catered to this stereotype to propel her burgeoning career, pulling faces and crossing her eyes throughout her performances to make her dances goofy yet sexy. However, it could be said that Josephine was also subverting this stereotype at the same time. By playing up to it on stage, Josephine was arguably mocking the audience and challenging their colonial fantasies about black women, not only reclaiming her image but ultimately becoming a huge success in the process.

Her tactics had clearly worked because by the late 1920s, Josephine had become the most successful American entertainer in France and the highest-paid entertainer in Europe, touring and performing for fans across the continent. She even performed onstage in Parisian nightclubs with her beloved pet cheetah, Chiquita, by her side, with Chiquita boasting a diamond collar.

With her popularity sky-high, Josephine also seized the opportunity to merchandise her image, as women were flocking to emulate her style through clothing, makeup and of course, her famous spit curls. In fact, the demand among Parisians to reproduce her look was so great that Josephine chose to capitalise on it by releasing her own hair pomade, Bakerfix, as well as a skin darkening lotion called Bakerskin. She would even release her own Josephine Baker doll, dressed in a little banana skirt.

Her success was unprecedented for a black woman at the time, and her popularity allowed her to move from the stage to the silver screen. In 1927, she starred in the French silent film *Siren of the Tropics*, which was a success in Europe and saw Josephine earning rave reviews

Josephine had a menagerie of animals including her pet cheetah, Chiquita



The Eton Crop and spit curl hairstyle that Josephine wore became iconic

Alamy

Baker performs at the Folies Bergère music hall, circa 1925

for her performance. She became the first black woman to star in a major motion picture, and she would subsequently embark on a film career that saw her appear in a handful of films, including her star turn in the 1934 French film, *Zouzou*.

Josephine had built an unprecedented new life for herself in Paris, a place without the racial segregation of the Jim Crow laws, or abuse. When discussing her life in St Louis, Josephine commented, "It was one of the worst cities in America for racial discrimination… I have very bad memories of that time". It is no wonder that Josephine fell in love with France, which had offered her the kind of freedom and safety that she had never experienced before.

Nevertheless, Josephine did return to America in an attempt to achieve the same level of fame that she had in France during the 1920s. In 1936, she travelled to New York City to perform in the famous Ziegfeld Follies, her first performance in America since she had left for Paris. But Josephine was shattered when newspaper critics published scathing reviews that laughed at and ridiculed her, topped off with a barrage of racism – one critic derogatorily referred to her as "the negro wench". Heartbroken, Josephine fled back to France and in 1937 she married French industrialist Jean Lion and began the process of becoming a French citizen, renouncing her US citizenship.

Although the Roaring Twenties had disappeared, Josephine continued to be a formidable force for the rest of her life. Following the outbreak of World War II, she worked for the French Resistance and performed for troops located in Africa and the Middle East. For her efforts, she received the Croix de Guerre, the Rosette de la Résistance and the Légion d'Honneur. Josephine would also return to America several times to take part in the Civil Rights Movement, famously refusing to perform in segregated venues and causing controversy with her outspoken and public criticism of racism there.

On 8 April 1975, Josephine held a performance in Paris to celebrate 50 years of her career and received a standing ovation with rave reviews to match. This was the last time she would star on the stage as just four days later, Josephine sadly passed away following a cerebral haemorrhage, aged 68. She was given a funeral in France with full military honours, with thousands of people turning out to pay their respects to the woman who dedicated her life to breaking down barriers, both on and off the stage.

Walery
Paris

Alamy

JOSEPHINE'S BANANA SKIRT

HOW A SKIRT MADE OF FAKE BANANAS WAS USED TO CHALLENGE RACIAL STEREOTYPES

Josephine's banana skirt has gone down in history as one of the most iconic looks of all time. Made from a string of 16 artificial, rubber bananas, it was a revealing skirt that complemented her seductive Danse Sauvage and propelled Josephine to global stardom. It was bold and sensual, and it represented the exoticism that audiences at the time associated with African and Caribbean cultures.

Not only did she make a name for herself as a groundbreaking entertainer while wearing the banana skirt, but Josephine used it to push boundaries and challenge the racial stereotypes of the day. The banana skirt is also significant because it led to Josephine's meteoric rise and ultimately helped her to create the platform that she would use to raise awareness of and denounce racial discrimination throughout her life.

Unsurprisingly, an outfit as famous as the banana skirt has been recreated many times. For example, Beyoncé wore a bejewelled version of the skirt during her performance at 2006 Fashion Rocks, paying tribute to Josephine with both her outfit and her dance.

> "Josephine used it to push boundaries"

Members of the Ku Klux Klan parading in Washington DC in 1925

Getty Images

RACIAL TENSIONS

SOME YOUNG, BLACK AMERICANS FOUND FORTUNE, FAME AND ADULATION DURING THE 1920S BUT FOR MANY IT WAS A DAILY BATTLE AGAINST WIDESPREAD INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

WORDS: **DR JOANNA ELPHICK**

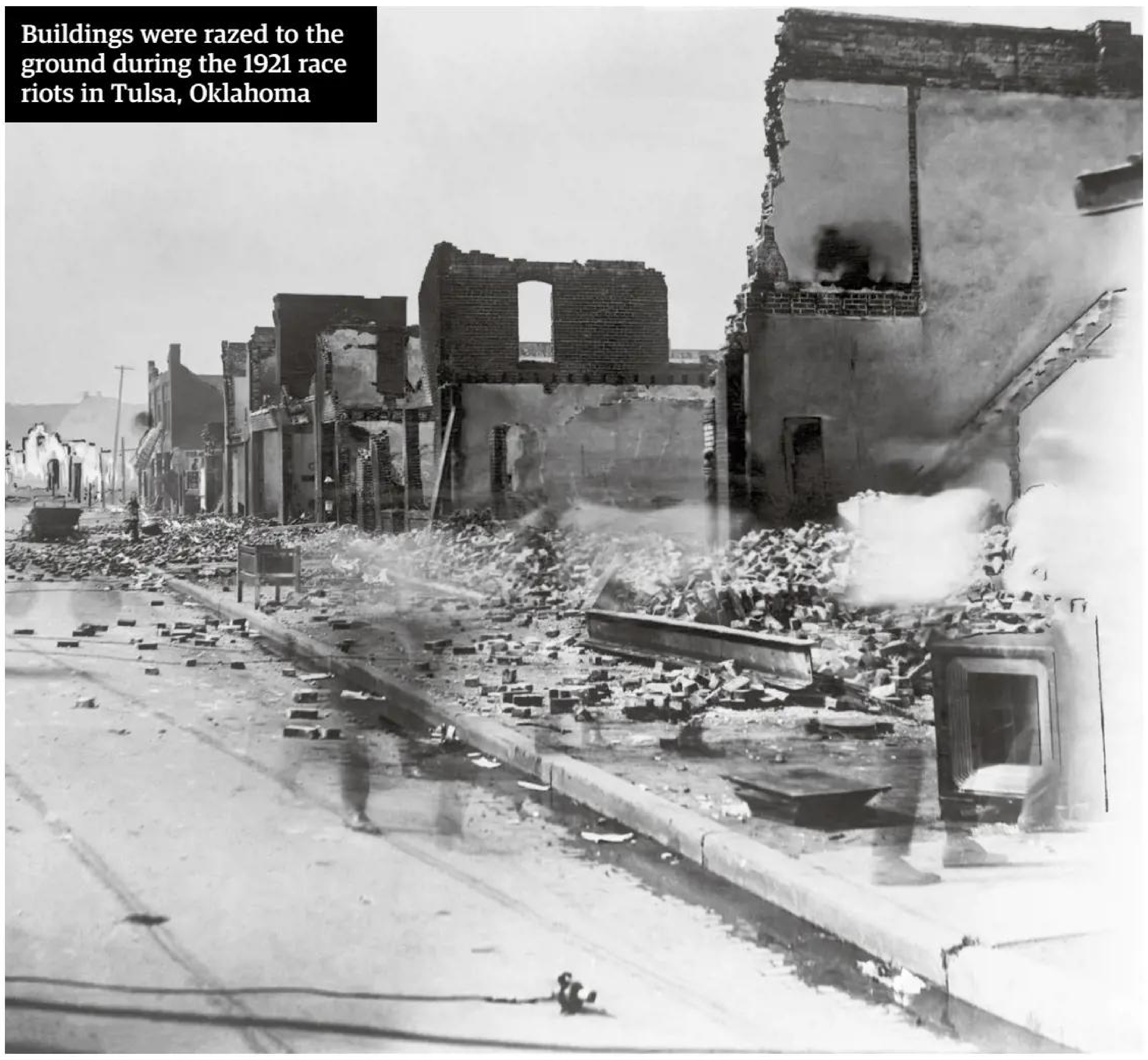
The blossoming socio-economic state of America gave white, middle-class people the boost they so desperately needed after the horrors of WWI, but not everyone was in a position to benefit from the financial boom and its accompanying opportunities. The US included 12 million Black Americans in 1920, with three quarters of them living in the South. Here was a land of deep-seated racism where 'Jim Crow Laws', first created in the late 1800s, were gleefully upheld. These abhorrent rules enforced segregation between the black and white people. African Americans were forbidden from sharing schools, transport, shops, or even seats with their white 'betters'. Racial intolerance and daily humiliation were regular occurrences, while the separation in educational facilities meant that black children were unable to access adequate schooling. This, in turn, perpetuated the economic class/race divide since many left the educational system unable to read or write and were ill-equipped to gain useful employment.

The Jim Crow laws also affected the African Americans' ability to vote, ensuring white supremacy. Exorbitant poll taxes and reading tests precluded the black people from any involvement in politics and therefore any influence in instigating change. It also meant that they could not run for local offices or serve on a jury. If a Black American was placed on trial, they were offered no support from those of their own cultural background. Eventually, the oppressed fought back, resulting in the 'New Negro Movement'. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, or 'NAACP' lobbied against federal laws that permitted violence against the Black Americans, particularly the act of lynching. Fear of violence was an everyday threat for the poor black people of the South, but none was so terrifying as the white lynch mobs.

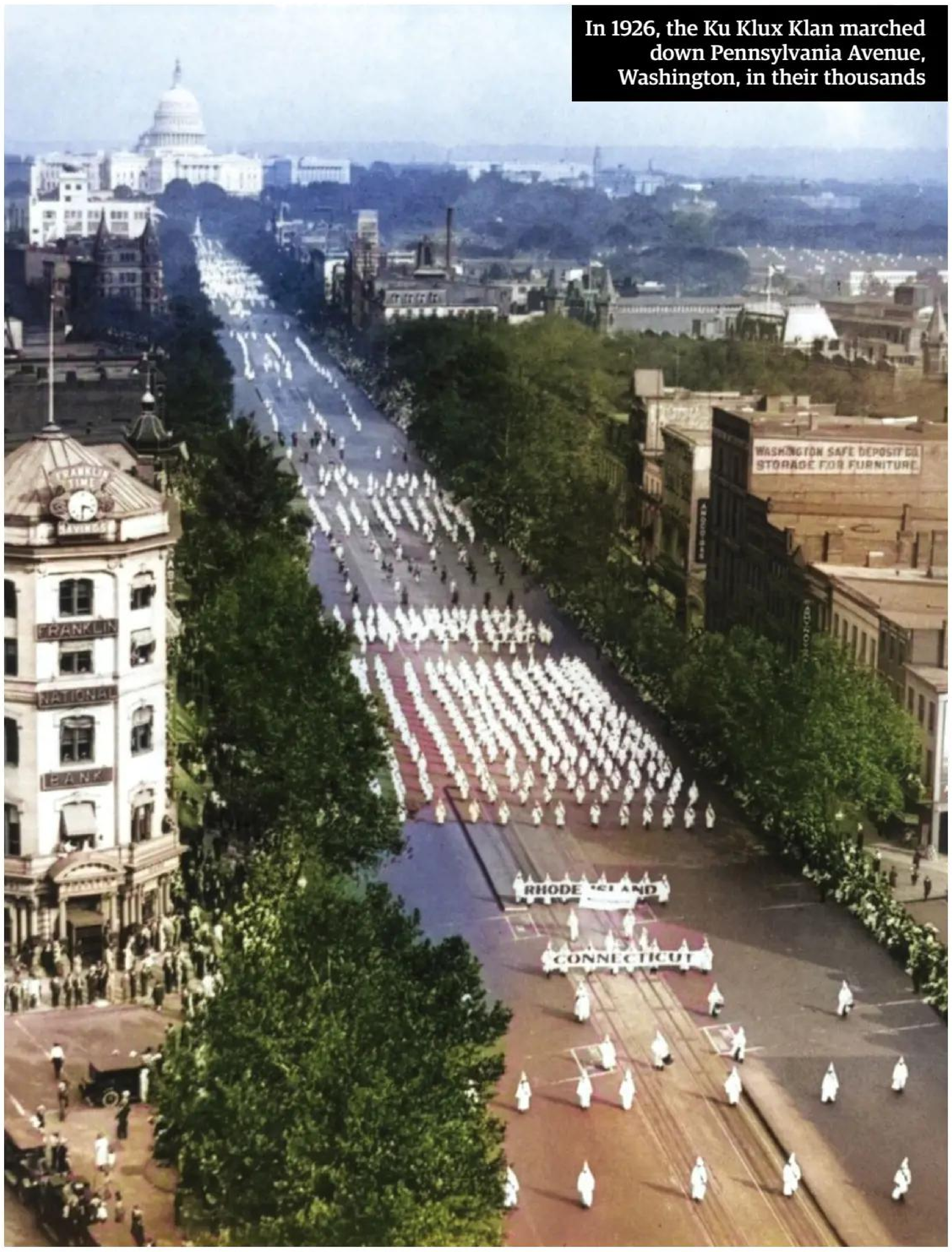
WHITE SUPREMACISTS AND THE RISE OF 'ROPE LAW'

Lynch mobs successfully convinced the locals that they were administering true and righteous justice, albeit without a fair trial, and quite literally got away with murder. Large groups of angry, white southern Americans stalked individuals in their own black neighbourhoods, dragging them from their beds and hanging them from nearby trees as a warning to other would-be 'upstart blacks'. Lynchings were mainly carried out by the Ku Klux Klan, or KKK, a violent racist organisation that was first established at the end of the American Civil War. Their popularity grew at an alarming rate during the 1920s as a reaction to the mass migration of Black American families, desperate to avoid the horrors of the South. By the mid-1920s the KKK had inducted over five million members known as WASPS due to the fact they had to be white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants to join.

By planting seeds of mistrust into the minds of middle-class white Americans, the KKK spread their hate-fuelled rhetoric beyond the South, reaching the northern realms where the fleeing Black Americans were heading. It seemed that the racist cloud was following them no matter where they went. By 1929, 400 Black Americans had been lynched and, since many of the members held high-status offices such as politicians and judges, it seemed that nothing could stand in their way. The KKK would continue their reign of terror until a number of public scandals and internal fighting would alert America to their true insidious nature.


Buildings were razed to the ground during the 1921 race riots in Tulsa, Oklahoma

A group of masked Ku Klux Klan members holding a cross and an American flag


In 1926, the Ku Klux Klan marched down Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, in their thousands

Getty Images

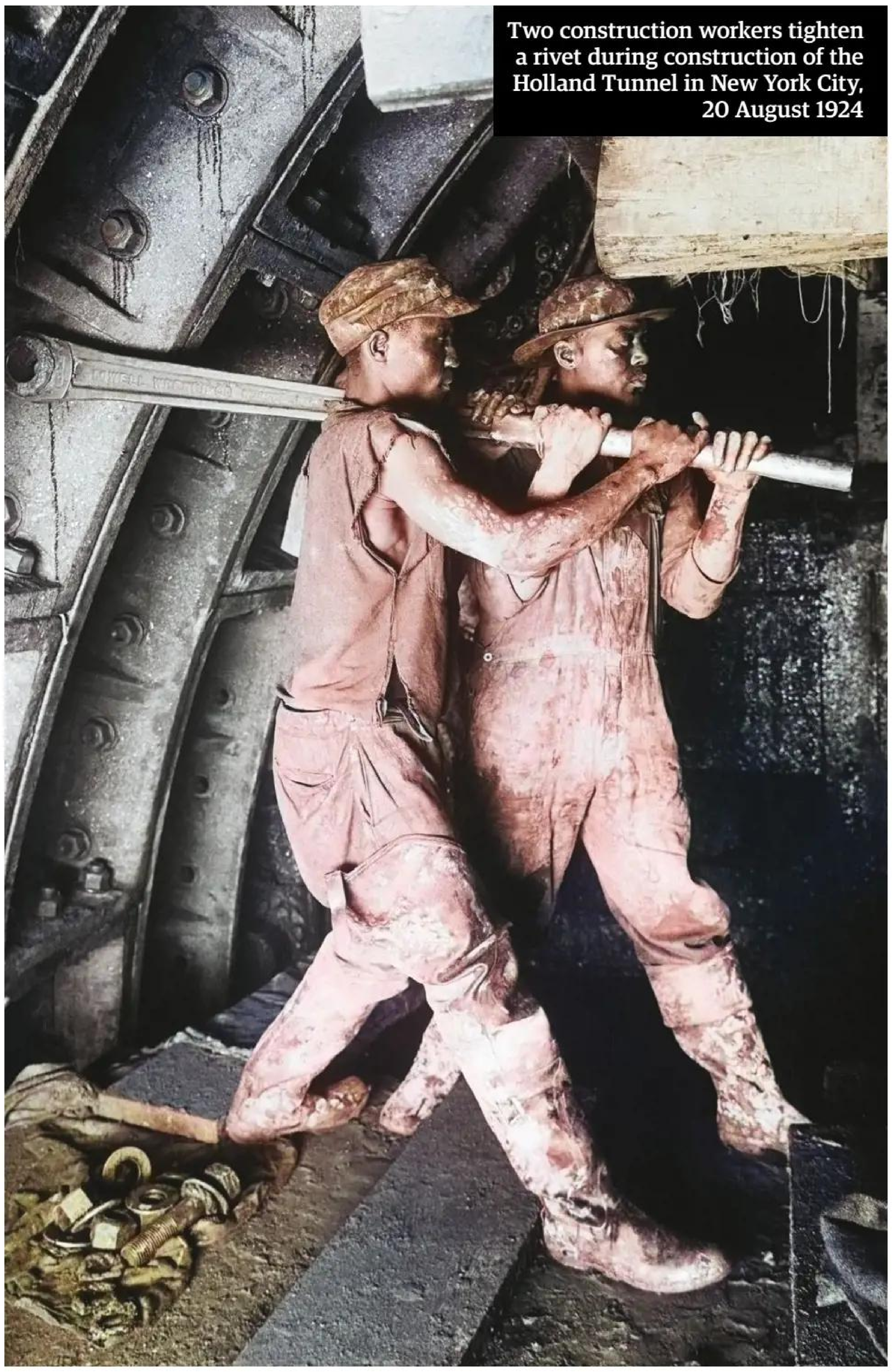
The case put a spotlight upon America's obsession with racial segregation and the overwhelming taboo against mixed race marriage

THE RHINELANDER TRIAL

IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST SCANDALOUS DIVORCE TRIALS OF THE 1920S, WITH DAILY UPDATES WRITTEN IN ALL THE MAJOR NEWS OUTLETS AND SHOCKING HEADLINES PLASTERED ACROSS THE FRONT COVERS OF EVERY NATIONAL NEWSPAPER, ULTIMATELY ENDING IN A VICTORY FOR THE BIRACIAL OUTCASTS OF SOCIETY

When New York City socialite, Leonard Rhinelander, married a working-class daughter of English immigrants by the name of Alice Jones, the Rhinelander family were disappointed in his choice. However, on discovering the fact that her father was of mixed race, the Rhinelander clan made it their business to break up the union. Although Rhinelander initially stood by his bride, the threat of disinheritance quickly changed his attitude and he filed an annulment, claiming that Alice had kept her ancestry hidden. The case was a sensation, with Alice being required to bare her skin to prove that anyone would have known she was biracial. In an unexpected twist, the jury felt sorry for the girl and ultimately ruled in her favour.

Alice and her turncoat husband eventually reached a financial settlement out of court, with the Rhinelander family agreeing to pay her a monthly allowance in return for abandoning her married name.



Two construction workers tighten a rivet during construction of the Holland Tunnel in New York City, 20 August 1924

LIFE IN THE BIG APPLE

Over a million Black Americans fled the South in search of safer pastures. Many made for the northern cities of New York and Chicago where Jim Crow Laws were not adhered to but, although it may have seemed things would be better for them, the reality for newly arrived immigrants was far from rosy. With their lack of education, most Black Americans were either refused work altogether or given the most menial of jobs. If they were lucky enough to find work, their salaries were often far lower than their white counterparts. If one or two black families moved into an area, the white families would inevitably pack up and leave, coining the term 'white flight' and creating 'coloured ghettos'.

However, without the oppressive Jim Crow Laws, and despite the xenophobic undercurrents, the black population were given some autonomy and a chance to better themselves. In the black neighbourhoods such as Harlem, young disenfranchised immigrants consoled one another by sharing their cultural background. Evenings were spent singing, dancing and playing the music of their ancestors, gradually blending ragtime, blues and jazz in a bid to establish their own culture within the white cities of the north. Here, they could take enormous pride in their cultural roots and relax among like-minded individuals. Those living in Harlem would have almost certainly been unaware of the seeds they had sown, but something was happening on the ghetto streets and a new movement was growing.

CULTURAL IMPACT

Spurred on by their struggle for equal civil rights, and as a backlash against the continuing oppression and vigilante violence in the Deep South, the residents of Harlem began to find new ways of expressing their anger and frustration. Rather than fight, these talented individuals relied upon 'artistic action' in the form of poetry, plays, novels and other artistic endeavours. Their plan was simple; to prove to White Americans that the black people were of equal worth, sensitivity and culture. As newspapers began printing 'black poetry' and academic articles, many individuals began rising above their enforced cultural sense of shame.

At the height of the Harlem Renaissance, the old stylised 'Uncle Tom' characters were put into question and a new 'black is beautiful' mentality began to appear. Black American women embraced the flapper fashions while the men stepped out in fancy zoot suits.

Young white middle-class Americans started taking notice of the new jazz music and black musicians were recognised as talented individuals rather than merely coloured entertainers. Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Bessie Smith and many other musical stars became famous, acting as role models to other up-and-coming black performers. White youngsters were equally enamoured with stars such as 'the Creole Goddess', Josephine Baker.

Hollywood and the Silver Screen were also quick to embrace Harlem's finest but racism was never far away. The new black stars may well have found fame but they still faced ridicule on a daily basis. Actors such as Al Jolson entertained audiences with his 'blackface', a term used to describe white people slathering burnt-cork makeup on and performing as a caricature of a Black American. As one of the Roaring Twenties' highest paid stars, he tacitly made racist humour something that was acceptable and caused worldwide humiliation for many other black performers.

The rise in speakeasies allowed both Black and White Americans to mingle in secret. This was a world away from the Deep South Jim Crow Laws and although such behaviour was unacceptable in legitimate restaurants, here in the 'Black and Tan Dens of Sin' anything went!

RECLAIMING POWER

Black American's lives undoubtedly improved during the Roaring Twenties. Life for some in the big cities was far safer and gave them opportunities for betterment. But many more were left in poverty and fear. Institutional racism followed them wherever they went and not even the famous were immune from it. The renowned Cotton Club in Harlem boasted the cream of Black American talent but they were nothing more than entertainers expected to sing, dance or wait tables. No black patrons were given a table alongside the white audience.

Many joined political organisations, the most influential being the NAACP. This group of white liberals and Black American campaigners, including Henry Moskowitz and William Du Bois, attempted to raise awareness of the plight of Black Americans, to abolish segregation across all States, ensure black people were afforded the fundamental right to vote, and to see to it that young black children received a good education. Members used non-violent methods and attempted to work with law enforcement rather than treat them as the enemy. Their campaign to educate America of the Deep South violence towards Black Americans caused widespread horror and condemnation which, in turn, significantly diminished the number of lynchings. Their fight continued long after the 1920s had stopped 'Roaring', culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which categorically banned any discrimination based on race.

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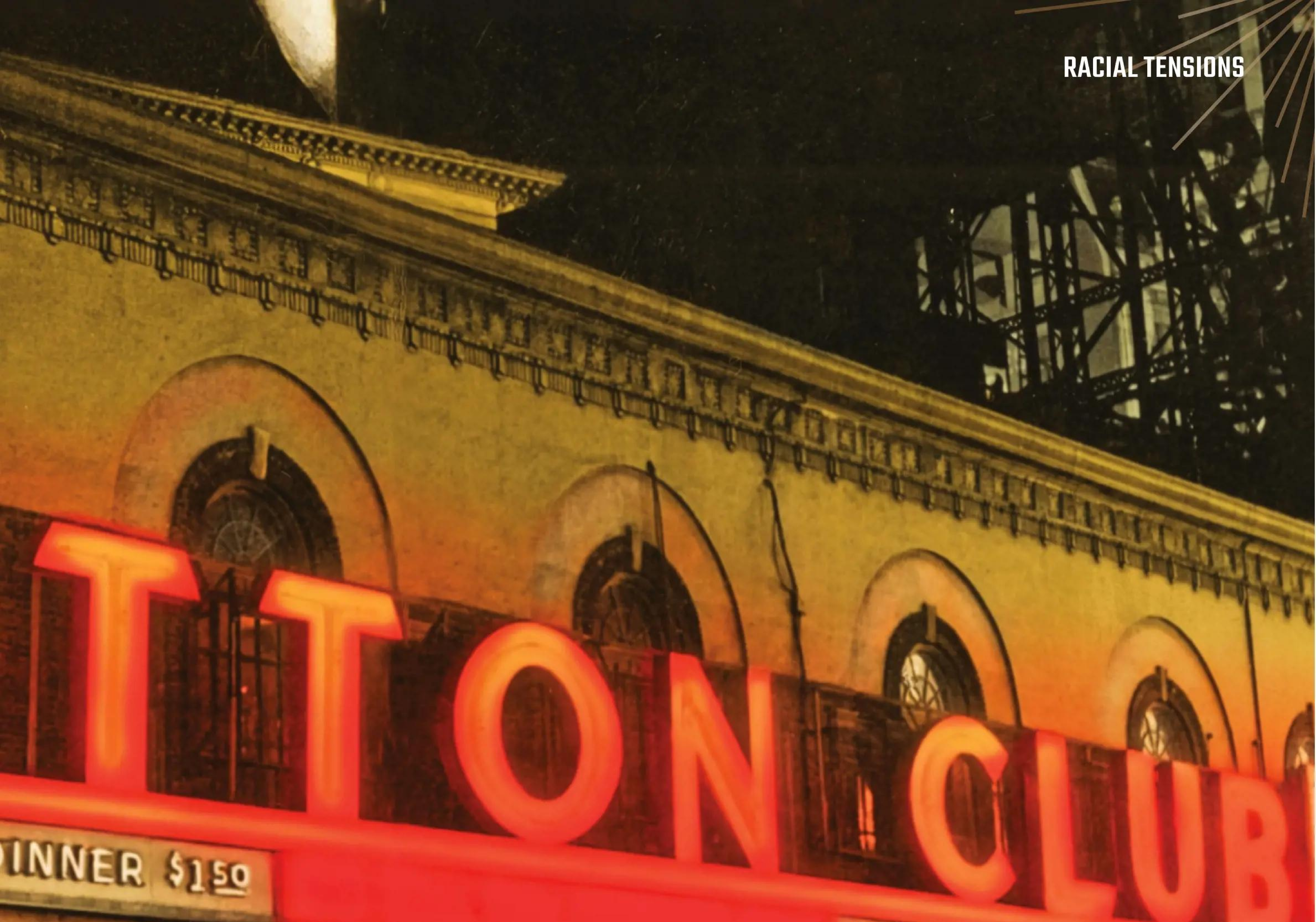
Harlem's famous Cotton Club hired Black Americans to prepare food and drink, serve as waiters and perform on stage, but they were not allowed in through the front doors as paying customers

Getty Images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DINNER $1.50
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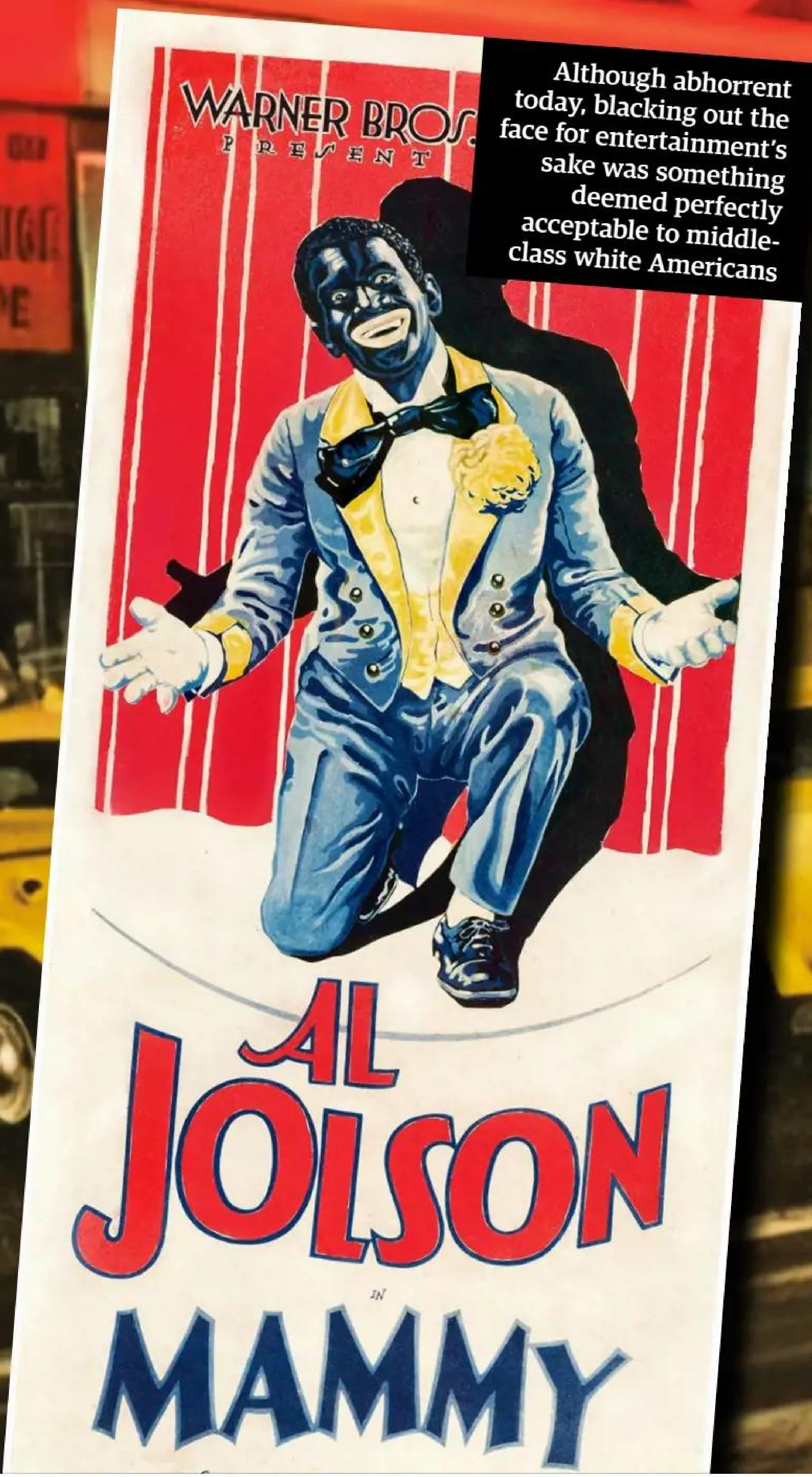

WARNER BROS
PRESENT
AL
JOLSON
IN
MAMMY

Although abhorrent today, blacking out the face for entertainment's sake was something deemed perfectly acceptable to middle-class white Americans

An alcohol smuggler is shot dead by a member of a rival gang in New York City, 1929

Getty Images

THE DARK SIDE OF THE DECADE

GANGLAND CRIME AND SOCIAL UNREST WERE AS MUCH A PART OF THE TWENTIES AS THE GOOD TIMES

Often romanticised as a decade of glitz and glamour, the Roaring Twenties is an era defined by its artistic, social and cultural dynamism. It saw the rise of the flapper, with young women rebelling against social norms by wearing short dresses and skirts, cutting their hair into bobs, publicly smoking and more. Jazz and blues music filled the air, particularly in the United States where the Harlem Renaissance flourished, while the Art Deco artistic movement spread throughout the West.

At the same time, mass consumerism reached new heights thanks to the unprecedented post-war economic boom that saw the growth of industries, such as the automobile and cinema industries, mass production and the development of new technologies. This economic prosperity not only lined the pockets of businessmen and industrialists, but it also led to increasing disposable income and investment in the stock market, with share prices rising to new heights. Yet, lurking underneath all of this change and prosperity, there was a much darker side to the decade. Across the West, many countries grappled with social and moral tensions, economic disparities and political change, leading to an increase of unemployment, homelessness, violence, crime, racism, conflict and in some cases, revolution.

For example, in the United States, Prohibition – the nationwide ban on the production, transportation and sale of alcohol from 1920 to 1933 – was introduced as a solution to various social issues and violence. Instead, Prohibition led to thriving organised crime, corruption and underground speakeasies for the illicit consumption of alcohol.

Across the pond, Britain and the rest of Europe were facing unrest and poor living conditions. Returning soldiers struggled to adapt to civilian life while suffering from the mental and physical disabilities war had inflicted on them, Irish republicans were pushing for independence, and there was discontent with the outcome of the Treaty of Versailles.

Worldwide, the political landscape was changing dramatically. For example, in Russia, the fallout from the 1917 Bolshevik revolution thrust Lenin and his communist regime into power. In Italy, Benito Mussolini, founder of the National Fascist Party, had been garnering support and elected as prime minister, and over in Germany, the seeds of discontent were being sewn in the aftermath of World War I.

THE DARK SIDE OF THE DECADE:

PROHIBITION AND THE CHANGING FACE OF AMERICAN CRIME

For all the success of the Temperance movement in bringing about the 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act – and thereby the outlawing of the manufacture, sale and movement of alcoholic beverages from 1920 to 1933 – millions of Americans still wanted to drink beer, wine and hard liquor; on the frontier, it had been a staple part of everyday life. This persistent demand for alcohol prompted its illegal production and sale during the Prohibition era, which became known as bootlegging. This in turn sparked the rise of the speakeasies – illegal, clandestine establishments that were founded specifically for the consumption of alcohol.

Illegal alcohol production, procurement and distribution expanded into big business and, given the breadth and fiscal potential offered by a new industry that spanned the entire country, it is no surprise that it was seized upon by organised crime gangs. While many existing vendors complied with the new laws, it was the gangs that stepped into the breach, filling not only their pockets but also those of the men who worked alongside them – corrupt officials, politicians and lawmen. Influencing the corruptible and raising the finance necessary to fund and control a complex industry like bootlegging, took a certain amount of pre-existing financial liquidity. It also required a sizeable workforce. This is where organised crime thrived, as low-level crooks could never compete with the power of gangland. Well-organised groups soon learned that they could control the full chain of the bootlegging operation, from the hidden distilleries and breweries through to the storage and transport to the retail outlets – speakeasies, restaurants and nightclubs.

APPLICABLE SKILLS

Criminal activity had been organised well before Prohibition took hold, with the skills learned when running vice and gambling proving especially transferable. Any gangs that ran a number of brothels or gambling dens knew how to service a broad range of different establishments in varied locations. They knew how to handle large sums of cash, how to protect their interests and hurt their enemies. All of these skills were pivotal to the running of a major bootlegging operation. Though gangs continued to be involved in pre-Prohibition criminal activity, bootlegging offered greater rewards and traditional operations like racketeering and gambling became a sideline for many liquor operations. In Chicago, most of the big gangs pulled back on their labour rackets and prostitution; the latter remained taboo for many Chicago citizens. In 1930, the *Chicago Daily News* estimated that the city's revenues from organised crime totalled $326 million, with more than half ($183 million) coming from bootlegging, breaking down as $103 million from beer, $56 million from hard liquor and $23 million from pure alcohol.

Al Capone stands as the best-remembered gangster of all time, rising to prominence in the Prohibition era

Many historians consider Chicago the epicentre of bootlegging during the Prohibition era. In April 1926, the *Chicago Tribune* estimated the illegal sale of alcoholic beverages as $3.6 billion nationwide, with a $200 million figure for the Windy City ranking at 5.6 percent of the total. Prohibition enforcers (according to the same newspaper) designated the western Chicago suburb of Cicero "the wettest spot in the United States". The city's central position and its proximity to Canada, courtesy of Lake Michigan, made it the ideal place to locate a bootlegging empire. As profits increased, so did the gangs' bids to expand their territories. Gradually, outfits in different cities began to cooperate with each other.

Getty Images

Transportation was key to this and made the liquor business different from the more established arenas of organised crime. The bootleggers' businesses was pan-regional – Chicago's Canadian whiskey came through Detroit's Purple Gang, who had direct access to Canada. In Cleveland, the mobster Moe Dalitz used aircraft and boats to carry liquor across Lake Erie before distributing his product through associates in Ohio and Pennsylvania. He also formed ties with Meyer Lansky in New York. Lansky started out peddling booze from his car and truck rental business under the Williamsburg Bridge.

These alliances became paramount to the big liquor peddlers and they began promoting conferences in a bid to keep the peace. One such meeting saw gangsters from Newark, New York, Chicago, Cleveland and Philadelphia get together at the Hotel President in Atlantic City, where they delineated boundaries and granted territorial exclusivity. As author and Prohibition expert Daniel Okrent notes, "This sort of arrangement would harden into formal partnerships," and he cites the cartel formed between Lansky, fellow New Yorker Lucky Luciano, Newark's Longy Zwillman, Charles 'King' Solomon of Boston and Daniel Walsh of Providence, who would control the illegal booze trade from Boston to Philadelphia. Chicago's John Torrio helped broker the deal, receiving 5,000 cases of liquor each month.

The mobsters' armies were filled by tough-nuts, many of whom had received weapons training while serving with General Pershing's American Expeditionary Force during World War I, and the gangs operated with near-military precision. An army-like hierarchy was formed and loyalty was expected, as it was with regular soldiers. This was ensured through promoting family ties, with brothers, brothers-in-law and cousins all collecting around the gangland boss.

THE TIME OF GANGSTERS

The rise of the bootlegging gangsters was swift. As early as 1923, the *New York Times* wrote of the new-style gangster, claiming, "He shoots from ambush, and preferably at backs," while in the following year Vermont senator Frank L Greene was badly hurt when caught in a crossfire between bootleggers and Prohibition agents just a few blocks from the Capitol. A string of famous names rose to prominence through the Prohibition era and the American Mafia crime syndicate – the most famous of all gangsters – was born from the coordinated activities of Italian bootleggers in New York City in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Indeed, for all their illicit behaviour and the machine-gun violence that formed the soundtrack to their lives, the gangsters emerged with a peculiar respectability, formed partly from their involvement in city nightlife and their links to the entertainment

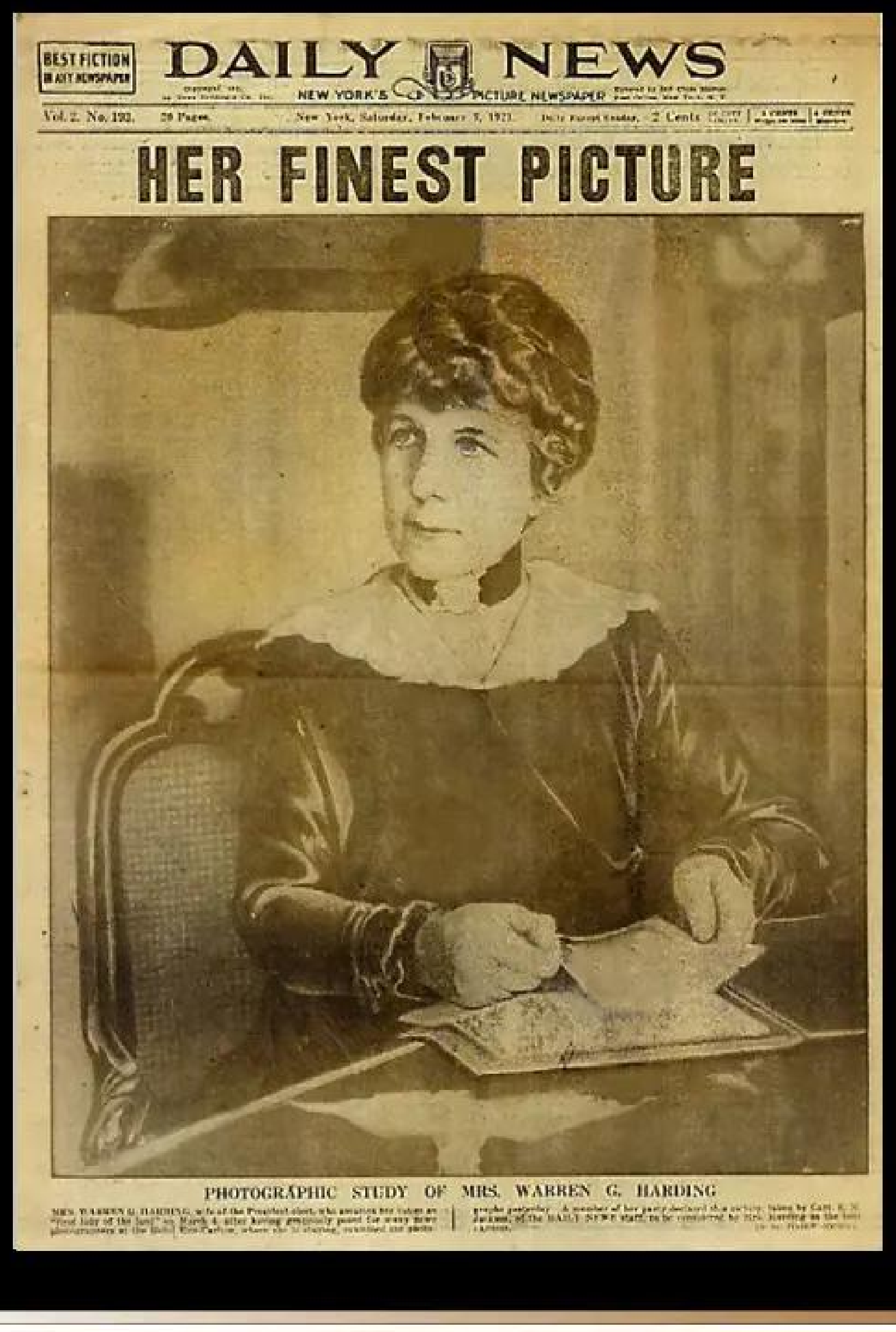
CRIME SELLS: READ ALL ABOUT IT

PROHIBITION AND THE CHANGING FACE OF AMERICAN CRIME COINCIDED WITH THE RISE OF THE TABLOID PRESS

Organised crime had an almost symbiotic relationship with the American press in the early part of the 20th century. Certainly, as the 1920s progressed, the newspapers needed the bootlegging gangsters. Here were dangerous men, synonymous with nightlife and the entertainment industry; they dressed well and gunned one another down whenever their alliances buckled or faded – this was top-notch fodder for the news editors.

Their relationship pre-dates Prohibition, of course, as crime has always helped sell newspapers. But they became closely entwined, in Chicago especially, during the Circulations War that ran c.1900-13. In America's second city the likes of Dean O'Banion, Mossy Enright, the McErlane brothers and various members of the Colosimo gang served as hired muscle for dailies like the *Chicago American* and the *Chicago Tribune* as the newspapers quite literally fought to boost their businesses and run down their competitors; as many as 40 people are said to have died in this long-running dispute.

Then, with the advent of Prohibition, came the birth of the tabloid press, beginning with the founding of the *New York Daily News* in 1919. These sensation-hungry outlets sought to build their readership on the piles of bodies that emerged as the detritus of Prohibition and its life alongside organised crime. The lexicographer, Stuart Berg Flexner, wrote that, "The newspapers began talking about [the] hiring of torpedoes, trigger men, gorillas and rods, and their use of pineapples and Tommy guns". Certainly, much of Al Capone's infamy grew from his readiness to give the newsmen a quote. When asked about his links with distillers north of the US border, he scoffed, "Canada? I don't even know what street Canada is on".



BEST FICTION DAILY NEWSPAPER

DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER

HER FINEST PICTURE

PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDY OF MRS. WARREN G. HARDING industry. Zwillman dated Hollywood doyenne Jean Harlow, while the ruthless Owney Madden romanced Mae West. The rising number of tabloid newspapers, meanwhile, sensationalised the mobsters' lives in a bid to drive sales. Prior to Prohibition, gang bosses had operated on the periphery of society. Not so the new breed. After all, as the historian Mark H Haller writes, the bootleggers, though criminals, "had customers, not victims". Pimps and brothel owners often used force against the women who worked for them, while gamblers and labour racketeers took huge cuts of their customers' cash. When providing illegal alcohol, however, the bootleggers were simply charging their customers what they were prepared to pay.

The gangsters weren't the only people to profit from bootlegging, though. The men recruited to keep the crooks in line were also taking in huge bribes. Lawman Pat Roche said in the *Chicago Tribune* that, "A one-legged Prohibition agent riding a bicycle could dry up the Loop [a once-notorious area in Chicago] in half a day, providing he were honest". That may have been true, but dishonesty paid a lot better.

Corruption during Prohibition took on an industrial stature. The extent of corruption linked to bootlegging was revealed by Chief Morris who said, "Reports and rumours reaching me indicate that 50 percent of the men on the Chicago police force are involved seriously in the illegal sale or transportation of liquor". The US attorney for North Illinois reckoned the size of the kickback industry in 1926 stood at $30 million per annum. Though the corrupt lawmakers and enforcers could help the gangsters in various ways, the mobs could not rely on the civil authorities to settle internecine disputes. "When there's competition there's bound to be little tiffs," said Rocco Fanelli, one of Al Capone's toughs. "The cleanest way out of them is with a gun. We do not have them for ornaments". He was right. During a three-year period in Chicago, there were 215 mob killings.

Gangland violence during the 1920s expanded to record levels. Some historians believe that Hollywood and the popular imagination have fuelled the story, but the evidence is there. As Okrent points out, "Epidemic violence in the 1920s… did increase by quite a bit," citing figures of slightly fewer than 12 murders or assaults per 100,000 in 1920 to 16 by Prohibition's final year, 1933. It had then fallen to fewer than ten by 1940. "From the assassination of Dean O'Banion in his Chicago flower shop in 1924 through [to] the St Valentine's Day Massacre five years later," Okrent writes, "the most famous killings of the era were ignited by alcohol."

LEARNING TO BE BETTER

Men like Capone, Luciano, Frank Costello and Lansky built their empires during Prohibition, yet when it was repealed, the gangsters were not going away. Prohibition had mobilised organised crime on a scale never seen before and with the rise of the big syndicates, the transnational scourge was going to blossom even further. Plenty of gangsters invested in legalised alcohol businesses but many returned to prostitution, gambling, drug trafficking and labour racketeering, using their new-found organisational skills to become more powerful than ever. Even though the Roaring Twenties was a time of many highs, it was also witness to many lows. In the USA, the criminal syndicates that rose to prominence would continue to define its social landscape throughout the decade and diversify into other areas of crime after Prohibition. Meanwhile, the economic boom that had led to increased investments, borrowing and consumer spending eventually culminated in the stock market crash of 1929. The burst of this economic bubble was devastating, heralding the Great Depression – both domestically and internationally – that would grip the 1930s, a decade that ended with the start of World War II.

John Dwight was scuttled as it passed 'Rum Lane' near Martha's Vineyard (pictured)

Getty Images

MURDER ON THE WATER

RUM ROW WITNESSED SOME GRIZZLY EPISODES COURTESY OF ORGANISED CRIME. THE SCUTTLING OF JOHN DWIGHT WAS A CASE IN POINT…

Rum Row along the Atlantic seaboard was a profitable avenue for smugglers during the Prohibition era, with the Florida skipper William McCoy said to be the pioneer of this illicit trade, sailing a schooner loaded with 1,500 cases of liquor from Nassau in the British colony of the Bahamas to Savannah and pocketing $15,000 in profits for his trouble. By the middle of the 1920s, organised crime syndicates were all too aware of the trade's importance and some vicious incidents ensued. A portent of what was to come arrived in 1923 with the scuttling of the steam trawler John Dwight, which was ferrying barrels of Canadian-made ale through 'Rum Lane' near Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. Hijacked by other bootleggers, or possibly one of the larger organised crime syndicates, the crew suffered a horrible fate. It seems the pirates were after the $100,000 in cash they were carrying for an upcoming purchase. The bodies of eight crewmen washed into the surf at the hamlet of Menemsha. It must have been a horrible sight. Some of the men had had their eyes burned out and their fingertips burned back by flesh-eating acid. Three had had the skin stripped from their faces. The captain's son was discovered adrift in a dinghy with a fractured skull.

The government responded by recruiting 4,000 coastguards who were said to be incorruptible. With a wage of around $36 a month, this was unlikely and the Atlantic seaboard remained a part of America's bootlegging network.

Actress Jean Harlow dated Longy Zwillman, giving the 1920s gangsters an air of respectability

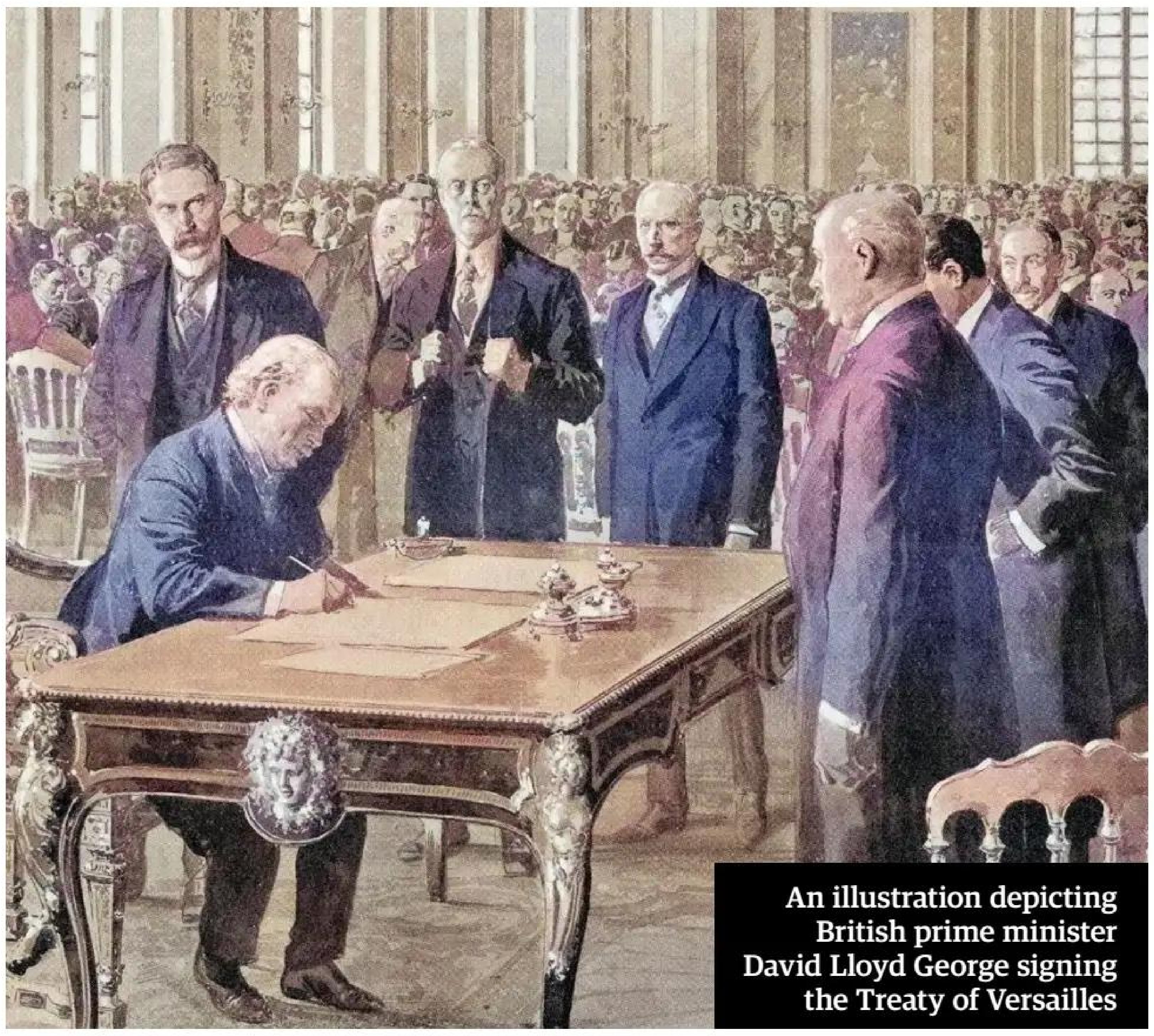
THE DARK SIDE OF THE DECADE:

BRITAIN AFTER THE GREAT WAR

War was over. The soldiers who hadn't been killed on the battlefields made their way home. After four years of bloodshed, the world seemed quiet – the kaiser had been conquered, and things could return to normal. But normality hardly ever follows war, and especially not one on the scale of the Great War of 1914-18. Soldiers were missing limbs or parts of their sanity. Mothers, wives and children were mourning loved ones. Governments were strapped for cash and trying to figure out a constantly changing geopolitical landscape. Britain was no different; everything was turned on its head. Republicans in Dublin had already started to make a violent bid for independence during the war, and now support for them was stronger than ever. Women were ramping up their efforts to gain suffrage after proving their worth when the men were away. National celebration was quickly turning to consternation – how would the government support its veterans? How would Britain continue as a dominant world power when it had no money?

LONG LIVE DEMOCRACY

If the war had proved one thing, it was that all people (or, at least, all British people) were created pretty equally. The upper classes didn't seem quite so stiff-lipped anymore; they had been fighting side by side with the common folk in the trenches, gangrene and all. When the war ended, so did the strict Edwardian class divide – which was no bad thing, considering how similar monarchical societies had fared elsewhere in Europe. Now that the classes seemed to be on a (slightly) more even playing field, the working class could wield a little more power. Building up support during the war years, the time had finally come for a big push in terms of the vote. The Representation of the People Act, passed in June 1918, extended suffrage to all men over the age of 21 for the first time, as well as women over the age of 30. Britain's voting population had almost trebled, from 7.7 million to 21.4 million. Having said that, the 1918 general election had the lowest voter turnout of any 20th-century election. There was no landslide win, either; a coalition of David Lloyd George's Liberals and Conservatives took charge with 473 of the 707 seats available. It seemed that one of the issues was with the electorate – while the party leaders wanted an election focused on the reconstruction of Britain, the people were too focused on the punishment of Germany. The political stage was set.



An illustration depicting British prime minister David Lloyd George signing the Treaty of Versailles

Getty Images

NO MONEY, MORE PROBLEMS

Germany was to blame for the world's ills. At least, that's what the British public seemed to think. Voting in the coalition was a sign to politicians that Britain wanted a harsh treaty, one that would seek to kick Germany while it was down. And so the Treaty of Versailles was drawn up quickly, but perhaps it was too quick – it went into effect on 28 June 1919, less than a year after the war's end. More to the point, Germany hadn't even been involved. The victors had wanted to ensure Germany would never be able to rise up like this again (not realising they were being the catalyst for Germany doing exactly that), and it would come at a hefty price. It didn't take long for the British public to realise that Germany wouldn't be able to pay it, and that one source of the country's income was gone. That was a problem for a country that had incurred debts equivalent to 136 percent of its gross national product. With the country running at a deficit, inflation was sure to be just around the corner. Strikes took place up and down the country – in fact there were more workers striking in Britain than in a decimated Germany. Coal, shipbuilding and steel, all vital industries in 1914-18, were collapsing. The women who had worked in the factories were forced out as the men returned home. Unemployment was rife – in 1921, it reached its highest point since records began at a staggering 23.4 percent thanks to an industry restructuring that saw almost one-quarter of the workforce lose their jobs. Economic

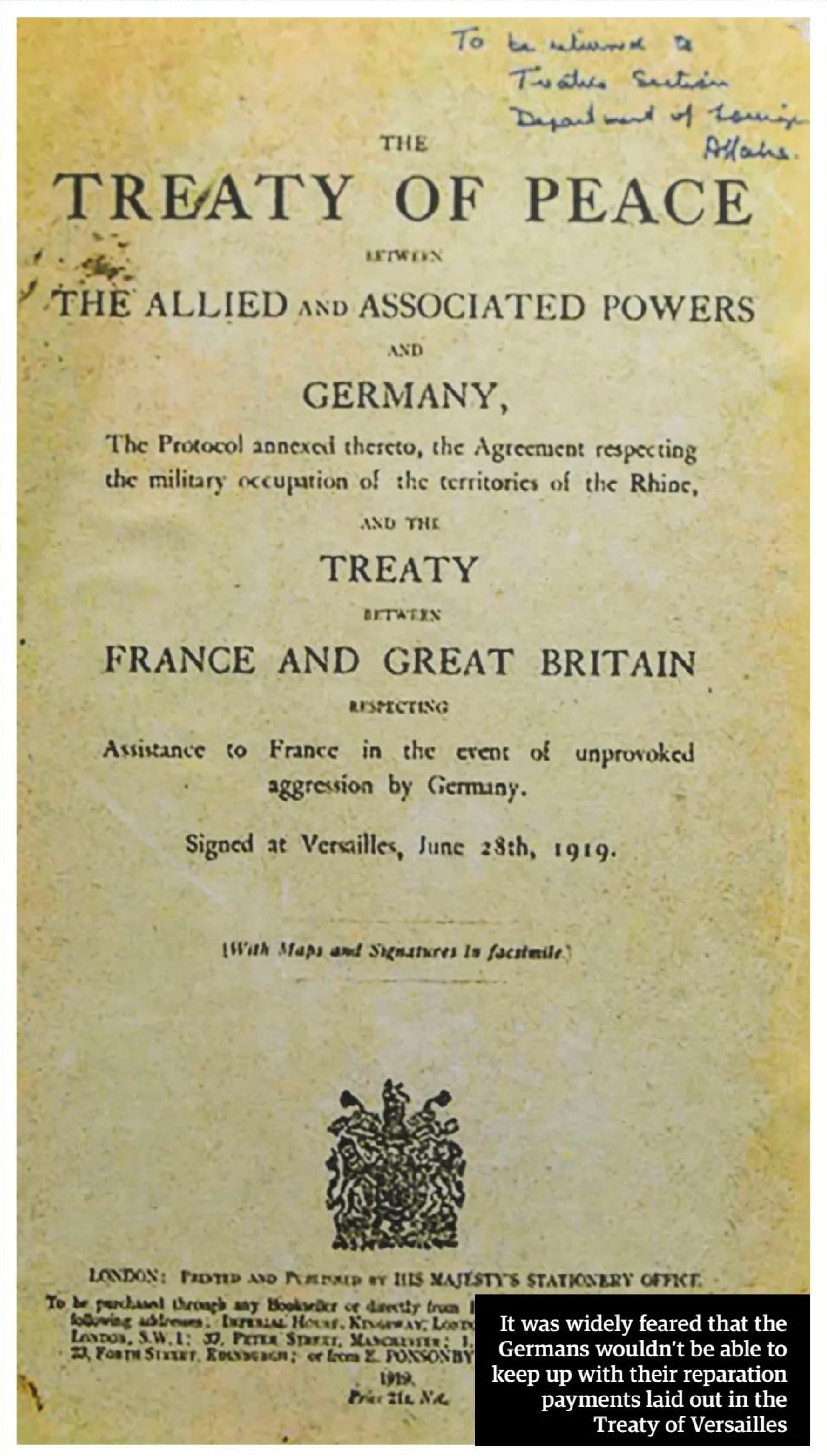
Crowds gather outside Buckingham Palace on Armistice Day 1918 to celebrate the end of the war

change was inevitable after the war. The world was different now. The government's solution? A return to the pre-war gold standard of $4.86. But the only way to do this was severe deflation, reducing domestic prices and wages. Between 1921 and 1929, wholesale prices fell by 25 percent, but it turned out they weren't matched by falling wages. Unionised labour movements were resisting wage cuts, leading to real wage unemployment; the supply of labour was outstripping demand. Furthermore, the deflation was discouraging consumer spending. In Britain, the Roaring Twenties is a bit of a misnomer. The US was enjoying becoming an economic powerhouse, especially now that it wasn't loaning anything to the UK. Britons were struggling, but none more so than the returning soldiers.

THE SOLDIERS' PLIGHT

World War I had seen almost one million British soldiers, sailors and airmen killed. Of the supposedly lucky men who returned, nearly two million of them were now physically disabled – 40,000 of them had lost arms or legs and would need financial support to keep them afloat in a world not made for the disabled. It was money that the government didn't have.

Artificial limbs did exist, but they were heavy and made of wood. The Disabled Society campaigned for light aluminium alternatives, and ex-servicemen started getting them fitted at places like Queen Mary's Hospital in Roehampton. For those who had been permanently disfigured, plastic surgery became available thanks to facial surgery pioneer Sir Harold Gillies. Artist Francis Derwent-Wood created masks for those whose faces had been burnt and couldn't be operated on. But the main issue was how the ex-servicemen could contribute to society in peacetime – it wasn't enough that they'd given their bodies and minds in service of their country. They now needed to be retrained. Homes were set up to help – St Dunstan's in Regent's Park,



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THE
TREATY OF PEACE
BETWEEN
THE ALLIED AND ASSOCIATED POWERS
AND
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The Protocol annexed thereto, the Agreement respecting
the military occupation of the territories of the Rhine,
AND THE
TREATY
BETWEEN
FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN
RESPECTING
Assistance to France in the event of unprovoked
aggression by Germany.

Signed at Versailles, June 28th, 1919.

[With Maps and Signatures in facsimile.]

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It was widely feared that the Germans wouldn't be able to keep up with their reparation payments laid out in the Treaty of Versailles

Women helped the war effort by working in factories across Britain, such as the Birmingham Small Arms factory, pictured here in 1917

Getty Images

London, took in 1,833 blinded ex-servicemen, while the Star and Garter in Richmond, Surrey, took in soldiers and sailors. The British Legion opened its poppy factory in Richmond, employing the war wounded, and some trained as limb fitters at Roehampton. However, it was near impossible for them to find work outside of these special schemes. In 1919, the King's National Roll was created in a bid to encourage companies to employ disabled ex-servicemen. It failed.

If the disabled weren't working, they weren't getting any money. With no money, there could be no food or housing. So special villages were set up around the UK for ex-servicemen and their families, like Haig Homes in Welwyn Garden City and Westfield War Memorial Village in Lancaster. The Prince of Wales opened Leicester's North Memorial Homes in 1927, providing another 35 homes. Regardless of the help, the soldiers' lives would never be the same.

TROUBLE IN DUBLIN

While one war had ended, another was starting. In 1916, republican Dubliners had launched the failed Easter Rising against British rule, seizing the opportunity while British soldiers were fighting abroad. On 21 January 1919, Sinn Féin assembled in Dublin and issued the Irish Declaration of Independence. Ambushes and raids saw Ireland descend into chaos. Catholics all over the country didn't want to be ruled by Protestant England, but Protestants in the north were putting up a good fight. With the British government done with war and fighting, in a sort-of compromise in 1920, the Government of Ireland Act looked to create separate parliaments for the north and south of Ireland. Two years later, the Anglo-Irish Treaty created the Irish Free State, now a dominion of the British Empire and comprising 26 of Ireland's 32 counties. The remainder became Northern Ireland, still part of the United Kingdom – a move that has caused tensions there to this day.

BEYOND BRITAIN

Britain wasn't in a great state, but it's probably fair to say that other nations had it much worse. The Bolsheviks had risen up in Russia, kickstarting a communist regime that would incur famine. To many poor men and women at the time, it seemed an attractive alternative; finally, they'd have the opportunity to become equals with those higher up the social ladder. Naturally, Western governments tried to stamp it out. Germany, Austria and Hungary were riddled with revolutions and counter-revolutions, with paramilitaries crushing workers' unions and securing borders.

In Italy, Mussolini was on the rise with his fascist party having a score to settle – their perceived slight was that they weren't treated as an equal with the other victors in the Treaty of Versailles. The Ottoman Empire was drawing its last breath in a bloody war to

According to soldiers, when a push was made over the top of the trenches, at least one soldier would come back mad

SHELL SHOCKED

THE PAIN OF SURVIVNG A WORLD WAR

The horrors of World War I have been told for more than 100 years, but it's still hard to imagine life as a soldier returning home. Those fighting in the trenches would have to watch as their brothers in arms were killed right next to them.

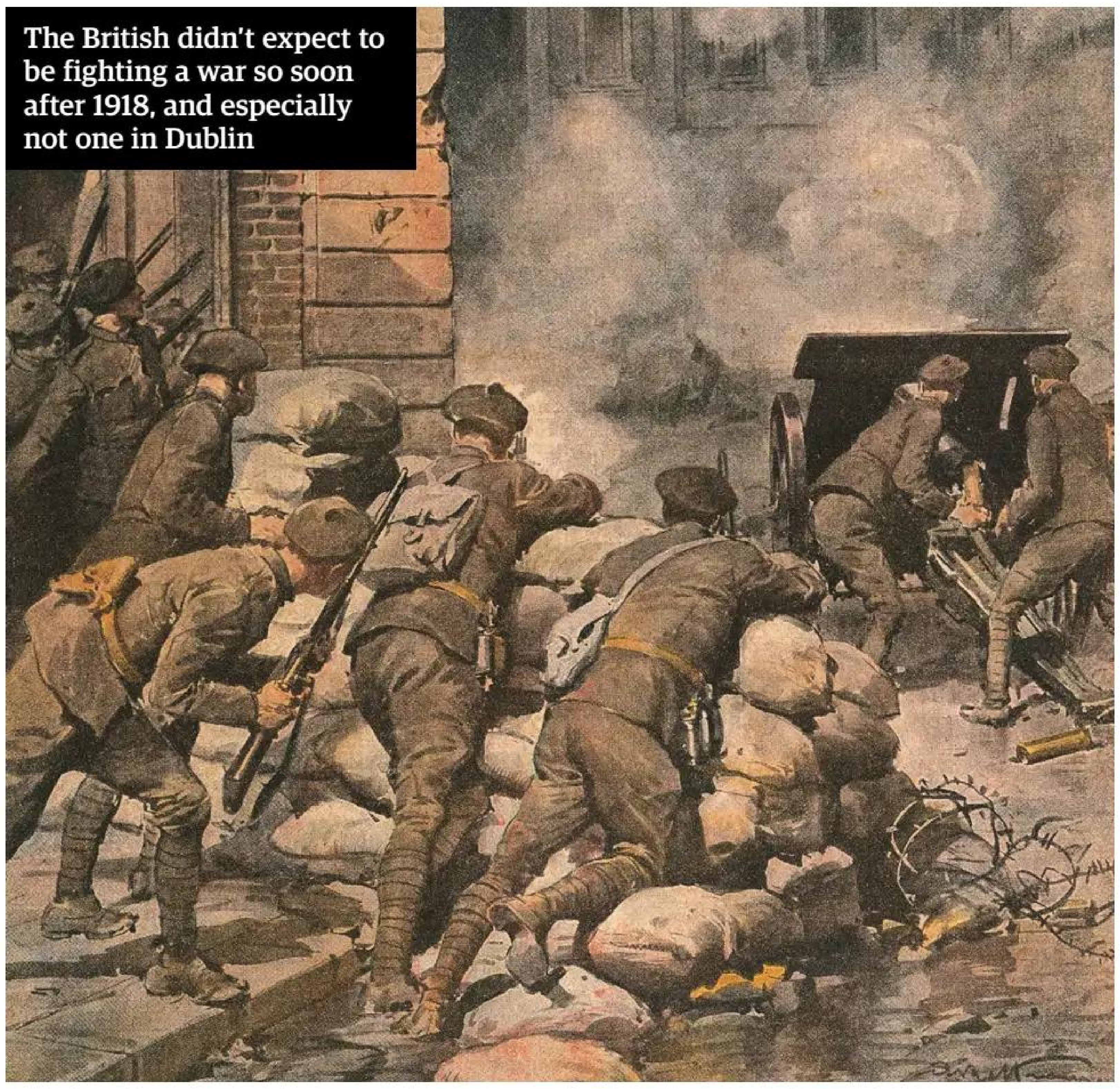
Constant bombardment meant little to no sleep. For some, it was months or years of absolute terror. It was the sheer number of veterans coming back with trauma and catatonia that sparked a new term: combat stress reaction, or shell shock. As early as 1915, army hospitals were having to treat soldiers with 'wounded minds', suffering from blurred vision and fits. It was completely unprecedented – and yet about 80,000 British soldiers were treated for their affliction. But in the army, men were supposed to be men.

Being diagnosed with shell shock was surrounded with stigma, and often attributed to moral weakness and cowardice. Today it's clear that the men were suffering from severe PTSD. Treatment was nothing short of harsh – electroshock therapy was one such 'cure'. Unsurprisingly, 80 percent of those treated were unable to continue their service. Once they had returned home, the servicemen didn't fare any better. With no support or understanding of shell shock or PTSD, ex-soldiers were left to fend for themselves.

One soldier, Joseph Clements, told the Imperial War Museum that as a tram came towards him in Gosport, he couldn't move. He was stuck, just staring at the vehicle coming towards him. His life, and the lives of many others, would never be the same again.

establish an independent Turkey. When Britain looked abroad, it saw the United States as its closest ally. The Washington Naval Treaty, signed in 1922, was an agreement that both countries would maintain parity in the building of battleships. Closer to home, France was the other dominant power in Europe, but Britain refused to sign an alliance. France was concerned that Germany and Russia would rise up to start another war (their fears, it turns out, weren't exactly unfounded), but Britain couldn't afford another war. The French premier, Raymond Poincaré was less than thrilled at British attitudes and Germany's failure to meet its payments. He wrote: "Judging others by themselves, the English, who are blinded by their loyalty, have always thought that the Germans did not abide by their pledges inscribed in the Versailles Treaty because they had not frankly agreed to them… We, on the contrary, believe that if Germany, far from making the slightest effort to carry out the treaty of peace, has always tried to escape her obligations, it is because until now she has not been convinced of her defeat… We are also certain that Germany, as a nation, resigns herself to keep her pledged word only under the impact of necessity."

Britain would eventually come around when Ramsay MacDonald was installed as prime minister in 1924. Together Britain and France would sign the Geneva Protocol and call for a disarmament conference. But when MacDonald lost power, foreign policy faced another U-turn. And so it would continue…



The British didn't expect to be fighting a war so soon after 1918, and especially not one in Dublin

JUNE 1923

FRED AND ADELE ASTAIRE ON TOP OF THE SAVOY

American icon Fred Astaire and dancing partner, his sister Adele, took their Broadway numbers to London's West End during the 1920s, becoming international celebrities. Their hit show *Stop Flirting* debuted in May 1923 and ran for 418 performances, during which time the siblings befriended the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York.

Getty Images

THE ROARING TWENTIES

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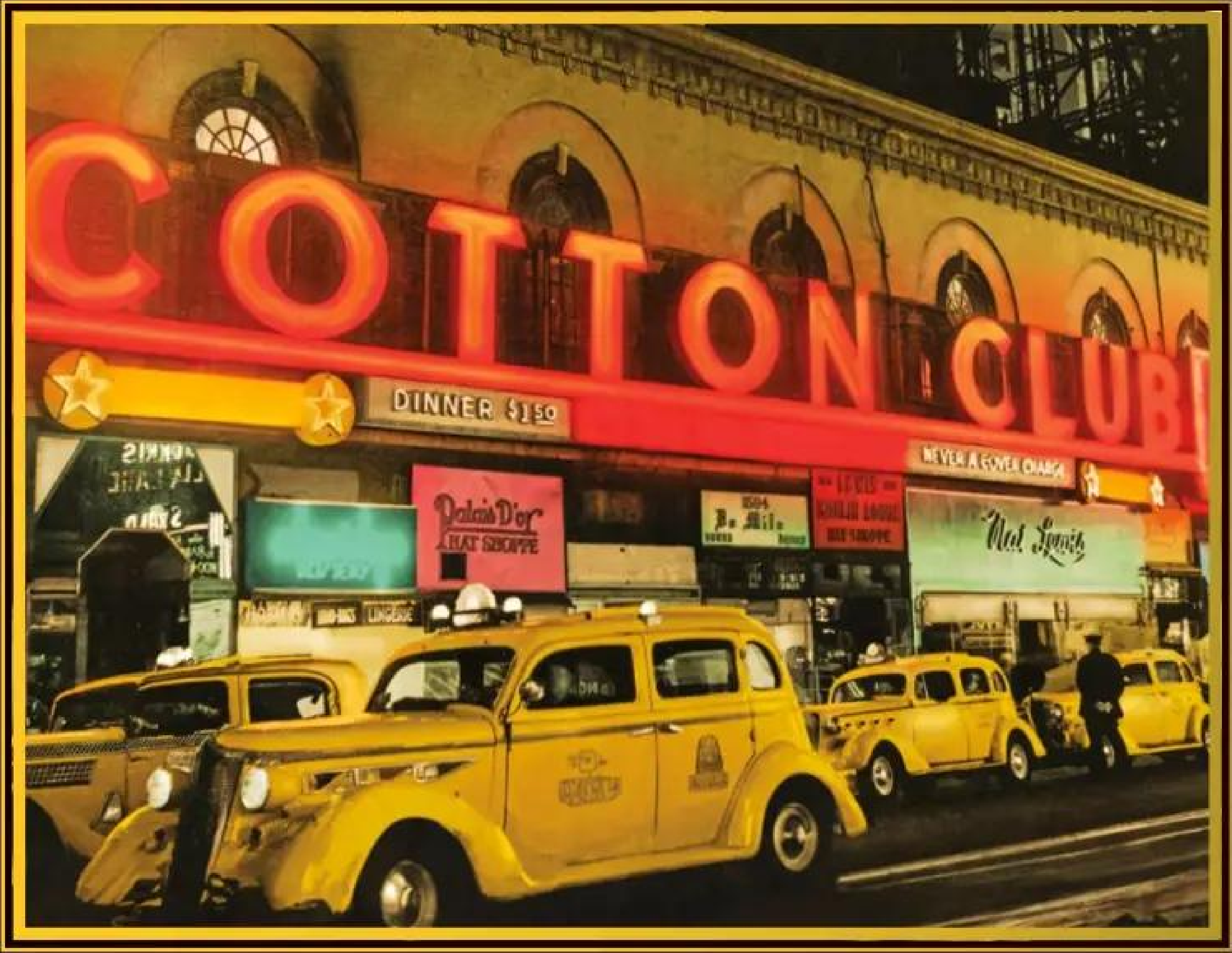

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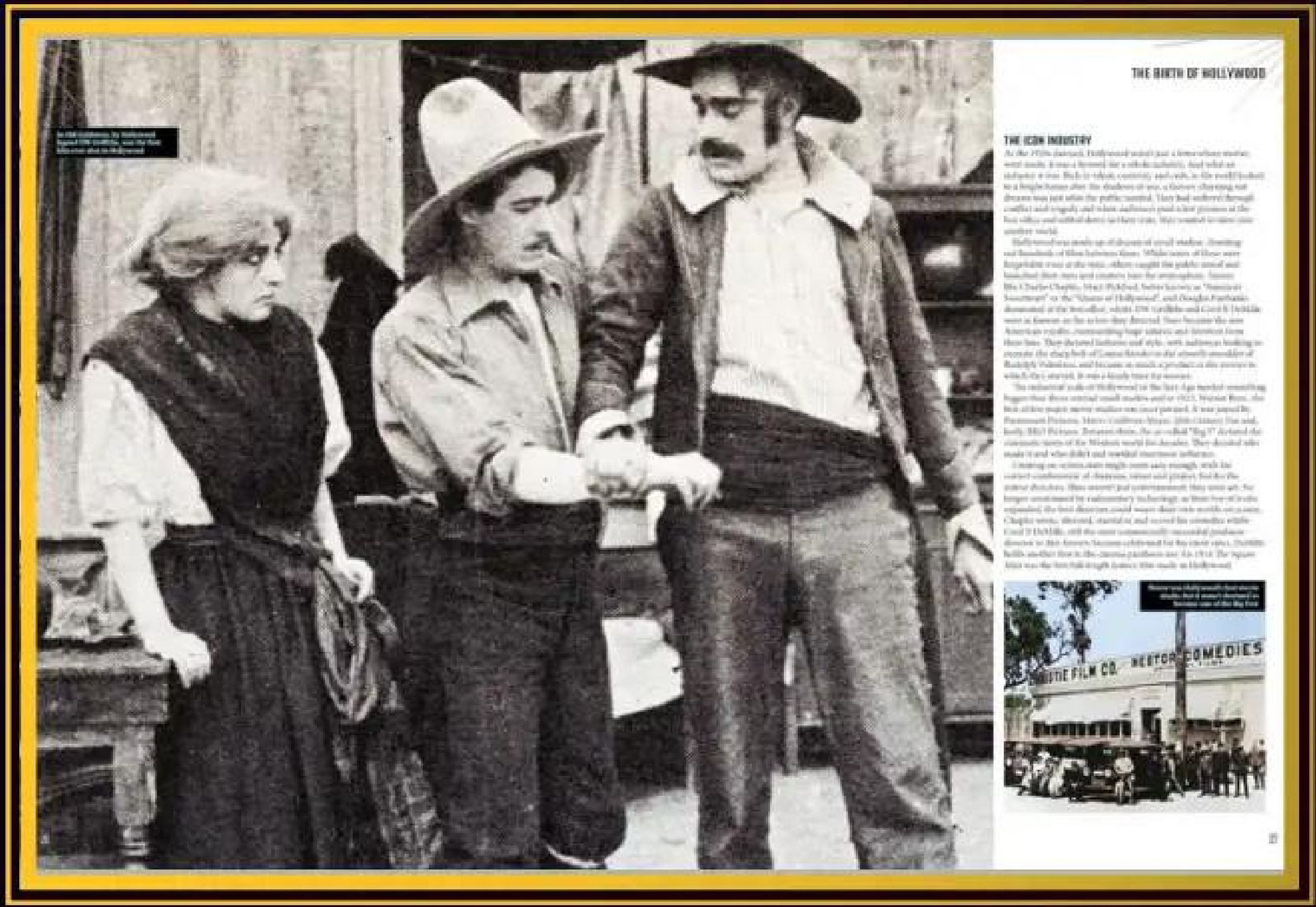

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